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CONTENTS

14 July 1992

NEAR EAST

REGIONAL AFFAIRS

- 'Arafat Mediates To Free Kuwaitis in Iraq [London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT 28 May] 1

PALESTINIAN AFFAIRS

- PLO Position Papers on Peace Process [Al-Shariqah AL-KHALIJ 24 Apr] 1
 PLO Succession Plans Affecting Intifadah [Paris AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI 5 May] 9

EGYPT

- Suez Free Zone Offered to Japan [London AL-HAYAH 8 May] 12
 Export Promotion Company To Form [London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT 7 May] 12
 Perspectives on Recent Incidents of Violence 13
 Incubated in Urban Slums [AL-AHRAM AL-DUWALI 6 May] 13
 Nurtured by Lawlessness [AL-AHRAR 27 Apr] 13
 Court Upholds Ban on Women's Group [AL-AHRAM WEEKLY 14-20 May] 14

IRAQ

- Demarcation Line With Kuwait Discussed [London AL-WASAT 1 Jun] 15
 Tariq Aziz on Changes in International Order [AL-THAWRAH 21 May] 17
 Sa'dun Hammadi on Oil, Arab Politics [AL-THAWRAH 20 May] 26

KUWAIT

- Iraq 'Lies' About Border Demarcation Issue [London AL-HAYAH 4 Jun] 33
 Foreign Pressure To Democratize Denied [London AL-HAYAH 3 Jun] 33
 Information Minister on Media Freedom, Security
 [London SAWT AL-KUWAIT AL-DUWALI 10 Jun] 34
 Petrochemical Industry Facing Difficulties [London AL-WASAT 1 Jun] 36
 National Assembly Reduces Family Compensation [London AL-HAYAH 3 Jun] 37
 Residency Law Violators Investigated [London AL-HAYAH 2 Jun] 38

MOROCCO

- Opposition, Government Proposals on Electoral Law 38
 Chronology of Events [AL-ITTIHAD AL-ISHTIRAKI 7 May] 38
 Draft Law Discussed [AL-ITTIHAD AL-ISHTIRAKI 7 May] 39
 Government, Opposition Views [AL-ITTIHAD AL-ISHTIRAKI 7 May] 42
 Eighteen-Year-Old Youth [AL-ITTIHAD AL-ISHTIRAKI 7 May] 45
 ANWAL Chief Editor on Press Restrictions [AL-ITTIHAD AL-ISHTIRAKI 23 May] 47

TUNISIA

- Background on al-Nahdah Demise [London AL-MAJALLAH 19, 20 May] 47

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

- Air Force Commander Discusses Prep School [AL-KHALIJ 16 May] 51

SOUTH ASIA

AFGHANISTAN

General Dostam Discusses Minorities, Regions [London AL-WASAT 29 Jun]	54
---	----

NEPAL

Local Election Results Summarized, Analyzed	56
Final Results Released [THE RISING NEPAL 10 Jun]	56
UML Alleges Rigging [THE RISING NEPAL 10 Jun]	56
Acceptance of Results Urged [THE RISING NEPAL 7 Jun]	57
Leftists Declining [THE RISING NEPAL 9 Jun]	57
UML Guilty of Complacency [THE RISING NEPAL 8 Jun]	58
NC Better Organized [THE RISING NEPAL 12 Jun]	60

REGIONAL AFFAIRS

'Arafat Mediates To Free Kuwaitis in Iraq

92AE0458E London AL-SAHRAQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
28 May 92 p 4

[Article by Huda al-Husayni: "'Arafat Offers To Mediate To Free Kuwaiti POW's"]

[Text] Kuwait—Some of those concerned with the matter of the Kuwaiti POW's have said that they are certain that some of the POW's are alive and that they even know their whereabouts. It seems that the issue of the POW's has become a political one. As a result of the pressures exerted by Kuwait on Iraq through international organizations, the Iraqi government has become very defensive and it is sticking to its false declaration of the POW numbers. An official of one of the POW societies said that many countries are trying to exert pressure on Iraq; likewise, the human rights organizations of the Arab countries are asking for information and making their contacts. Mr. Yasir 'Arafat, chairman of the Palestinian Liberation Organization, has gotten in touch through a third party with one of the unofficial societies that are requesting the release of the POW's and expressed his willingness to meet with the official of the society and coordinate with him. After this meeting 'Arafat would exert pressure on the Iraqi authorities in order to release the Kuwaiti male and female POW's.

The unofficial Kuwaiti officer of the society also said that according to sources in the Palestinian embassy in Kuwait, thirty-one Palestinians were unaccounted for after the liberation. He added that the embassy staff was very surprised when they heard the statements of the Palestinian officials claiming that hundreds of Palestinians were unaccounted for. He said that the Kuwaiti Ministry of Interior had provided protection for twenty-eight Palestinians from the embassy staff and transported them to the airport, bearing in mind that eight of them were members of the Arab Liberation Front which supports Iraq and worked for the Iraqi intelligence services during the occupation. He also added that two people were court-martialed after the liberation and were sentenced to life imprisonment.

Baghdad has announced that it had permitted a Red Cross delegation to search for the Kuwaiti POW's all over Iraq but a Red Cross source in Kuwait denied the Baghdad statement.

PALESTINIAN AFFAIRS

PLO Position Papers on Peace Process

92AE0412A Al-Shariqah AL-KHALIJ in Arabic
24, 25 Apr 92

[Article: "Heated Palestinian Dialogue Over Peace Process; Hani al-Hasan's Paper Opposes Participation Form and Criticizes Delegation's Performance; We Have

Acted as If We Want Political Settlement at Any Price; Palestinian Delegation Abandoned Principles Determined by National Council; Israel Made Negotiations Gains Even Before Sitting at Negotiations Table; Sha'th Document Defines Palestine as Consisting of Bank and Gaza Strip Only; 1991 Accord With Jordan Is Tantalizing to Ceding Major Gains in 1985 Accord; Mahmud 'Abbas: Madrid Round Is Successful by All Criteria; We Have Underlined Independent National Identity and Convinced World of Just Nature of Our Cause"]

[24 Apr p 17]

[Text] Tunis—While we approach the fifth round of talks, scheduled to convene in Washington on the 27th of this month, what preoccupies the Palestinian arena mainly is the talk of "peace" and the start of the work of the multilateral committees. A Palestinian debate began within some of the organizations and factions which make up the PLO and then evolved into a growing opposition which assumed the form of an organized protest (the National Council members document). This opposition was to proclaim itself at the meeting which the Central Council was scheduled to hold this 10 April. But this meeting was delayed until 3 May because of the accident [plane crash] which befell Palestinian Chairman Yasir 'Arafat.

Informed Palestinian sources see that the next council meeting will have extraordinary importance because it will precede the meeting of the multilateral committees, which stir division on the Arab side, and will follow the fifth round, which is likely to be the most important round within the context of the peace conferences from Madrid to Washington—conferences which have been confined so far to formalities, not dealing yet with any substantive issues. This importance emanates here from several considerations, the first of which is that this round will crown the negotiations in Washington because the sessions will be then shifted to Rome. The second consideration is that this round could be the round which differentiates the pre-Israeli election phase from the post-Israeli election phase. Numerous circles believe that the next rounds will not be held before the elections—which the Labor Party is bet to win.

This is why the internal Palestinian dialogue and the opposition to the peace negotiations assume a special dimension, considering that they coincide with these other complications and interventions. What can be noted as prominent features in this regard are the two papers that are being circulated in the Palestinian circles. The first has been drafted by Hani al-Hasan (who is opposed to the negotiations) and the second drafted by Mahmud 'Abbas, alias Abu-Mazin (who supports continued negotiations). [Abu-Mazin's] paper was to be the requested follow-up report on the "peace" dossier for the Central Council.

The two papers acquire additional importance because they come from two members of the Fatah Central

Committee, a body which is experiencing an internal feud over "peace" and organizational issues.

Hani al-Hasan's paper consists of 51 pages and is divided into three parts. The first criticizes Palestinian participation, the second envisions the alternatives, and the third consists of supporting documents. We will present here the most important points noted in the first part and Abu-Mazin's response to them.

The first part begins with a lengthy introduction that calls for Fatah to pause, to examine and evaluate the circumstances of its participation which was based on a "faulty assessment" of the outcome of the Gulf war: "At this moment, the prevalent belief among Palestinian leadership circles is that one cannot but accept the plan of the triumphant United States, for if it is rejected, there is no alternative to this plan. Moreover, whoever rejects it would be faced with total loss. He would be renounced and destroyed and would miss the only opportunity for a solution for the foreseeable future, for as many as 20 to 30 years." Al-Hasan adds: "As a conclusion from all the factors, we say that the outcome of the war, entailing a U.S. victory, also demonstrates elements of U.S. weakness. Vision, patience, and sound strategies are required to exploit this weakness."

Following are the most significant focal points in the paper:

On the Path to Negotiations

When Baker began his numerous tours of the area and when he launched his contacts with the Palestinian delegation at home—a delegation which received its instructions from the leadership in Tunis—the Palestinian negotiating partner quickly gave the Americans and the Israelis the impression that there was no intractable, ultimate [Palestinian] position, that they had not drawn any line which they were unwilling to cross.

The Palestinian negotiator acted on the basis of two starting points:

First, a clear and explicit desire to pursue Israel's agreement to sit and negotiate with the PLO.

Second, adoption of the tactic of embroiling Israel; i.e., on the assumption that the Israeli government acts in bad faith, one could expose the duplicity inherent in its proposals by accepting them, bringing them out into the open.

Thus, by the time the stage was set for the actual negotiations with the enemy, Israel had already purloined all of the Palestinian negotiating cards and was confident that the Palestinians would have to work very hard to get anything because they had nothing left to offer.

Moreover, the Palestinian negotiator acted as if what was needed was Palestinian decision-making, ignoring the dire need for Arab political decision-making. He fulfilled the wish of some Arabs that he negotiate with

Baker independently. Had the Palestinian negotiator rejected this wish and stubbornly refused [to break ranks with other Arab states], it would have been possible to break this chain of Arab collusion which was encouraged by the Gulf war. These other Arabs would then have seen the need to open windows to the Palestinian revolution and to reach an understanding with it. It then would have been possible to make a collective Arab political decision instead of the separate Palestinian decision.

The Palestinian delegation started the negotiation process on the basis of the principles established by the Palestine National Council [PNC], namely:

The PLO is the Palestinian people's representative in the negotiation process.

The Palestinian delegation must be invited as an independent delegation.

The negotiation must be based on the Palestinian people's right to self-determination and to repatriation.

The settlement activity must be halted before the start of the negotiation.

Resolution 242 is presented for negotiation on implementing, not interpreting, it.

Regrettably, through the process of negotiation with Baker, all these points were abandoned with record speed. Contrary to the PNC resolutions, the PLO representation was abandoned. Single representation of the Palestinian people at home and abroad was abandoned. Representing Jerusalem in the negotiating delegation was abandoned, and the formation of an independent Palestinian delegation was abandoned in favor of a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation.

Because these issues were abandoned, the Palestinian negotiator finds himself in a weak bargaining position. He finds that he has no card to offer in return for his national rights, that he can must abandon these rights to remain a superficial party to the negotiations. Here, the Palestinian negotiator is rushing headlong into ever more precarious ventures, such as the idea of taking refuge in and relying on a just U.S. position which would put pressure on Shamir to compel him to withdraw [from the occupied territories] and allow the establishment of a Palestinian state there. This idea has taken the form of an effort to exact from the United States a guarantees paper that would regulate the U.S. position.

Sadly, the future historian will discover that one of the most significant, positive features of the post-gulf war era—the deep split within the U.S.-Israeli camp—is [not because of a change of U.S. heart, but], in the first place, because of the dire U.S. need to maintain a presence at the sources of oil and along the oil routes for the sake of the oil itself, and in the second place, because of U.S. preoccupation with issues along the Pacific Rim and in Europe, where it senses an imminent economic threat. Sadly, too, the future historian will discover, upon

reading the minutes of the Palestinian delegation's meetings with Baker prior to Madrid and in Cairo and upon concluding his historical review of the U.S. guarantees paper, that instead of reinforcing and bolstering this split in the U.S.-Israeli camp, the Palestinian negotiator simply accepted settlement formulae conforming to Israeli conditions on the pretext of the U.S. guarantees paper. However, this paper cannot be considered a fixed point of reference since we have already accepted the catastrophic conditions of the negotiations invitation. Thus, we have handed over the Palestinian side of the future political process to the United States, imagining that it will control the process and will resolve the complexities. If the Palestinian delegation in Washington and Jerusalem, before Madrid, had demonstrated a resolve that negotiation and capitulation are not the only options available to the Palestinians, and if Baker and (Bessmertnich) had heard words evincing determination and not academic lectures, the (wedge) splitting the U.S.-Israeli relations apart would have been driven deeper and the United States would have escalated its pressure on Israel to make one concession, at least. They would have let a sword hang over its head if it continued to reject [a just peace], and this sword would have been the alternative of going to the Security Council to deal with the issue. This is something which Europe and China strongly support, both of whom are looking for a real role in settling the Middle East crisis.

We have always pointed out and we will continue to reiterate an axiom of the science of negotiation, namely that the starting point in negotiations determines the course of the negotiations and the outcome they produce. This is why we view the course of the current political and negotiation developments with true concern and apprehension that affects our national conscience when we consider what outcome these negotiations will produce.

We have acted on the basis that we want a political settlement at any price, and now Shamir and Baker have us in their clutch. This has been and continues to be a major negotiating mistake that has led to a series of retreats. These retreats have deprived us of the ability to engage in actual negotiation and have caused issues to be decided in advance. If the United States is not convinced that we can pronounce an effective "no," then a political catastrophe embodied in continued occupation is at the door. What is more serious than all this is that a number of approved fundamental negotiating documents have led to concessions which are a false interpretation of the Palestinian peace initiative, or not related to the initiative at all. Leaders and cadres must not forget that there is a big difference between a lecture delivered somewhere or agreements made between two parties outside the framework of a negotiation process, and a document approved by the Palestinian people's legitimate authority, especially if the consequence is the inclusion of such statements or agreements in the negotiation process as binding commitments to those who made them. If implemented, such unofficial positions will be

translated into irrevocable steps. We all recall Gandhi, that awesome attorney who was such a master of English. When it came to eloquence, Gandhi's name was mentioned in the same breath with Bernard Shaw. When he entered the hall designated for negotiations with the British, he insisted on speaking in his mother tongue. When the British delegation chief wondered about this, Gandhi told him: I prefer this so I will not mis-state something and lose my people's future or a vital gain because of a linguistic mistake.

Invitation to Negotiations

It is a foregone conclusion that we acknowledge the U.S.-Soviet invitation to the negotiations as the sole official basis that is binding upon the United States, upon "Israel," and upon us for determining the course of the negotiation process. This invitation is the sole binding authority.

It is axiomatic to say that the reassurances paper that the United States has given Israel is not in conflict with the wording of the invitation. Meanwhile, it is evident to anybody with an elementary political intellect that the U.S. assurances paper given to us is binding upon the United States only in matters that agree with the Israeli assurances paper.

It is also clear and evident that via the content of the invitation paper, Israel made negotiational gains even before sitting down to the negotiating table.

Regarding the Composition of the Palestinian Delegation

Israel has succeeded in dictating its conditions on the makeup of the Palestinian delegation through the U.S. paper of assurances to the Palestinians and through the guarantees given to Israel, considering that the assurances paper states the following:

The United States understands that the delegation members will be from the territories (does not say occupied) who:

1. Agree to negotiate on the basis of two tracks (a Palestinian track and a Jordanian track).
2. Agree to the phased nature of the negotiation.
3. Wish to live with Israel peacefully.

Nobody may be compelled to sit with any individual—they didn't say with any party (objection is possible to an individual)—with whom the other side does not wish to sit. (Thus, an objection was actually made against fellow struggler Sa'ib 'Urayqat after he had made statements that didn't please Israel. So he has been denied membership in the "negotiating" delegation, contrary to how things started at Madrid).

Ending Egypt's Role as a Partner

Even though the invitation paper states that Egypt will play the role of a participant, Israel has dictated that

Egypt shall not attend as a participating party (after Madrid). Shamir has said that it is no longer possible to adhere to the text of the Palestinian part of the Camp David accord and that negotiations with the Palestinians will be based on the initiative he launched in 1989, taking into account the new reality existing now. This means that Shamir has abolished the Camp David accord provision saying that the Jordanians, Egyptians, Israelis, Palestinians from the West Bank and Gaza Strip, and others will determine the future of the occupied territories.

When we learn that ex-President Jimmy Carter told brother 'Abu-'Ammar when the two met in Paris that the phrase "and others" wasn't inserted accidentally and that the minutes of the Camp David sessions make it clear that what this phrase means is Palestinians from outside the occupied territories or from the PLO, then we understand why Israel wants to get rid of the Camp David accords and of the role of Egypt as a partner in the negotiations.

Israel's determination to keep Egypt outside the sphere of participation in the bilateral committees is motivated by a scheme to get rid of Israel's international commitment to the Camp David accord. Israel has thus made certain gains, for example:

1. It has dictated that the Palestinian delegation will be formed, now and in the future, of people from inside Palestine, thus defining Palestinian as a resident of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip only. Consequently, it has succeeded in turning the Palestinian refugee issue into a problem for the international community. For the first time in 40 years, Israel has wrenched the acknowledgment that this issue is no longer an Israeli-Palestinian issue.

2. In the area of representation, the phrase "Palestinian people's representatives" is mentioned explicitly in the heart of the Camp David accord—"Egypt, Israel, Jordan, and the Palestinian people's representatives have to participate in negotiations to solve the Palestinian issue...." Meanwhile, no mention whatsoever is made of the phrase "Palestinian people" in the 'catastrophic' paper inviting participation in the Madrid conference. The phrase "Palestinian people" is replaced by the word Palestinians (with the s added) where representation is concerned. The word "Palestinians" has not even been used with the definitive article "the" in any formulation concerning "representation and rights."

We have also found out that the U.S. assurances paper uses the word "Palestinians" in every similar paragraph, whereas the phrase "Palestinian people" was used by the Americans just once, and that was not in the context of the representation issue.

3. The most significant justification used by Israel to disavow the Camp David accord is the Palestinian negotiator's acceptance of a phrase contained in the invitation paper concerning self-rule—a phrase which

does not refer to full self-rule and which leaves this issue open to negotiation. Meanwhile, the Camp David accord provides explicitly for establishing "full Autonomy", considering that the issue of sovereignty is not subject to negotiation. It is true that Israel did not accept the phrase in Alexandria because the phrase is not in its favor. But the United States did not support Israel on this point at the time.

Shamir has said explicitly: "We have proposed a modified self-rule formula that takes into account the developments that have occurred since Camp David, foremost of which—as an example of the reality—is the increase in the number of Jews living currently in Judea, Samaria, and Gaza."

4. The Camp David Accord stipulates explicitly that the Palestinian refugee issue will be discussed by a four-party Arab-Israeli committee. It also calls for repatriation of those driven away from their homes in 1967.

Confirmed reports indicate that the international approach to the region's refugee problem is to focus on increasing economic aid to the Middle East countries concerned in order to develop their economies so as to ensure work opportunities for refugees there and to settle every refugee where he lives; also, to open the doors of immigration outside of the region.

Based on this vision, the political reading of the United States and Israeli determination to place the refugee issue within the framework of the multilateral Moscow conference and not within the bilateral conference leads us to just one conclusion; namely, that the Palestinian refugee issue will follow just one direction: No repatriation and no reparations but just inducements to emigrate out of the region. In return, Israel will be rewarded with dozens of billions of dollars in reparations for Arab Jews who emigrated of their own free will.

A casual observer realizes without significant effort that Shamir has succeeded in getting a ceiling put on negotiable items without committing himself to a final settlement and without including Jerusalem in the negotiations. This ceiling is much lower than that to which the Likud committed itself at Camp David. The Camp David accord, ratified by the U.S. Congress, has gained the force of a U.S. law. This requires that a documentary report be prepared annually on how closely the two parties adhere to the word and spirit of the accord so that U.S. aid for the Egyptians and the Israelis can be determined accordingly. This explains the question asked repeatedly by Rubinstein, an Israeli negotiator, on our position on using Camp David as a starting point. The Palestinian answer, however, was that our authority is the invitation message.

It is true that it is absolutely unnecessary to be drawn into accepting Camp David. But is it not a catastrophe for the negotiator to say that his authority is the "catastrophic" invitation paper, forgetting the resolutions of the legitimate international authority, particularly resolution 338 which states explicitly that the call for the

Geneva conference is to implement resolution 242 and not to negotiate on it? Is it not strange that the Palestinian negotiator failed to raise immediately a number of questions that would have compelled the Israeli negotiator to acknowledge his past obligations at Camp David so that we could get hold of the negotiator and submit to him further demands which would advance us toward achieving our unalterable national aims? If the Israeli rejected them, then Egypt would notify Congress of Shamir's infringement of the accord as a step toward demanding a halt to the U.S. aid to Shamir and toward shaking Shamir's reputation in the U.S. public opinion. What is regrettable is that the hasty answer given by a member of the delegation [to Rubinstein's question] is the answer that Israel wanted to hear, i.e., yes to the catastrophic invitation paper only.

Is it wise to let Egypt slip away from our hands and is it wise to turn Egypt into just an adviser instead of insisting that it be involved as a partner who should not slip away from us or from his obligations on the pretext of undermining the delegation's Palestinian identity? Is it wise to sacrifice the negotiation principles in return for the lame representation that we have gotten? Let us say, analytically, that it is a historic event when Palestinians and Israelis sit face to face. But we should not forget that Israel, not the PLO, is the party which had rejected the idea of a unified Arab delegation.

The Stanford Document

In addition to accepting the grave points contained in the invitation paper which predetermined the course of the negotiation process, the Palestinian negotiator has proceeded to make free concessions in other parallel areas without discussion or consensus. These concessions have undermined fateful and strategic issues in an amazing manner.

The most significant thing that can be noted in this regard is the document which brother Nabil Sha'ath negotiated with an Israeli popular delegation.

Agreement was reached on this document at a symposium organized at Stanford University in the United States. The document has been called a "popular action framework for the peace process."

The document was published in AL-SINNARAH, issued in Nazareth. The paper said: "What makes the document all the more significant is that Dr. Nabil Sha'ath, the PLO representative, attached to it a personal letter asserting that he is empowered by the PLO to affirm its support for the document and to consider it a possible basis for future dialogue in the search for peace." What is even worse is that the letter was attached to the document and both were sent to U.S. officials, thus assuming an official character. The following point is a most distinct and serious point in the document:

The document makes it clear that in the provision speaking of "mutual recognition between Palestine and Israel, it understands the word "Palestine" to mean the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Accord With Jordan

The Palestinian negotiator has made other comparable concessions, embodied in the new accord concluded with the Jordanian government. What does this accord contain?

Israel has chosen and insisted on the joint Palestinian-Jordanian delegation formula because it intends to hold negotiations in the future on "permanent arrangements" with the countries surrounding it, not with the PLO.

What is surprising is that we served this objective when we concluded with the Jordanian Government on 20 October 1991 an accord in which we ceded numerous gains we had made in 1985 when we signed the joint Jordanian-Palestinian agreement.

The new accord is entitled, "Agreement Between the Government of the Hashimite Kingdom of Jordan and the PLO." Why? Isn't such an accord supposed to be signed by the State of Palestine and the Hashimite Kingdom of Jordan?

What is more serious is that under the provision of general principles, it is noted that this document seeks to outline a vision of the future relationship between Jordan and Palestine. It does not say a relationship between the two states of Jordan and Palestine within a confederation framework, even though Jordan has recognized the State of Palestine, even though we have an embassy, a flag, and an ambassador in Amman, and even though an agreement was concluded to that effect in 1985.

Add to this that the phrase "State of Palestine" is mentioned nowhere in the accord. What is interesting here is that the 1985 agreement was signed by brother Abu-'Ammar and King Husayn. At the time, brother Yasir 'Arafat was PLO chairman only, not president of the State of Palestine. The State of Palestine was mentioned explicitly in the 1985 agreement whereas the new accord, signed by brother Yasir 'Arafat and Jordanian Prime Minister Tahir al-Misri, makes no mention of this state.

It is well known that the United Arab Kingdom plan, projected by Jordan in 1972, includes the phrase "Jordan province" and "Palestine province." Whoever examines the provisions of the new Jordanian-Palestinian accord finds that we have agreed to the principle of the United Arab Kingdom; i.e., a Swiss-style confederation or, practically, a federal union, through our failure to mention the name "State of Palestine" and through another provision in the accord stating that "this accord shall become valid when it is signed by the government of the Kingdom of Jordan and the PLO."

Once again, the Palestinian negotiator plays half a game, giving his official approval to the fact that the final solution will be achieved within the framework of the United Arab Kingdom while continuing at the same time to demand the right of self-determination and an independent state. So why should the Americans and the Israelis believe us?

The logic that the PLO uses to talk of an independent Palestinian state has several objectives. But the most important objective is the practical objective that seeks to ensure that in the second-phase negotiations of the current negotiating process the PLO will secure a role which will allow it to participate in a manner that guarantees Israeli withdrawal from all our territories that were occupied in 1967.

Premature Palestinian entry into the negotiations carries the risk of obligating us to pacification and to an economic life that interacts with the Israelis throughout the five years of self-rule, whereas enjoining the ultimate solution demands a military and political confrontation by way of continuing and escalating the intifadah [uprising].

This is why the roles have to be divided with Jordan and Egypt, so that the Palestinian negotiation train will meet with the peace process train at the point of negotiations for withdrawal and a final solution, not at the point of self-rule. Then we can conclude our accord with Jordan regarding the particulars mentioned above and any others so that we have our own solution with its high negotiation price which is paid by Israel and America.

[25 Apr p 15]

[Text] Tunis—The report by Mahmud 'Abbas, alias Abu-Mazin, begins by defining "components of the peace process." This definition is tantamount to a lengthy technical introduction that forms the first half of the report. But it sheds light on the roles of the parties to the peace conference and on the conditions that motivated the Palestinians to go along with the conference. In the second part, 'Abbas makes conclusions under the headings, "Our Most Important Accomplishments in Madrid," "The Washington Round," and "The Coming Talks." This part reflects the counter viewpoint and counter position which is represented by 'Arafat and which holds that Palestinian participation has been beneficial.

Our Most Important Accomplishments in Madrid

The Madrid round (first bilateral conference) was a successful round for us by all criteria:

1. We succeeded in underlining the independent Palestinian national personality (and identity). This was accomplished through the distinguished position and special status which our delegation achieved despite its presence within the framework of the joint Palestinian-Jordanian delegation. This accomplishment was embodied in the delegation's address and then in the

delegation's response on the following day (equal time for all delegations), in the distinguished seat occupied by Dr. Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi, in the equal motorcade given the delegation, in the meeting with President Bush, with the king of Spain, and with Spain's prime minister, in the press conference that followed the bilateral conference in which the heads of the Palestinian and Jordanian delegations and the Israeli delegation were accorded equal treatment, in the equal number of members at the bilateral conference, in the delegation's distinguished communications, and in their superior performance.

2. We succeeded in emphasizing the full unity of the "components" of the Palestinian delegation under the PLO leadership. The United States allowed a degree of balance by inviting a delegation formed of 14 individuals (equal in number to the other delegations) from the West Bank and Gaza. This is in addition to an advisory delegation consisting of three individuals from Jerusalem and three from abroad who are not prominent PLO members (Dr. Anis Qasim, Dr. Rashid al-Khalidi, Dr. Camille Mansur). The United States (on an understanding with the Spanish Government) also permitted the PLO delegation, led by Dr. Nabil Sha'ath, to arrive in Spain officially (received at the hall for visiting heads of state). It also permitted a hot telephone line between the residence of Palestinian Ambassador 'Isam Kamal and the office of Chairman Yasir 'Arafat.

Secretary Baker met with the advisory delegation officially and had daily contact with Faysal al-Husayni and Hanan 'Ashrawi (from Jerusalem). The United States rejected any Israeli veto on the names (as long as they are from the West Bank and the Gaza Strip). The delegation which President Bush received consisted of Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi, a founder of the PLO, and Samih Kan'an, a Fatah struggler who has spent 16 years in enemy prisons.

3. We succeeded in underlining the U.S. role and in enlisting open U.S. help to put pressure on Israel. This was done by selecting Madrid, by imposing the aforementioned conditions on Israel, by preventing it from withdrawing when the Palestinian delegation chairman mentioned the PLO, its leadership, and the Palestinian people's historical demands in his address, by rejecting Israel's demand that the bilateral meetings between Israel and the Arab countries be held in Israel immediately, by insisting on a single site for bilateral meetings with all the Arab delegations, and by setting the time and place of the next meeting. All these are procedural matters. But the U.S. anti-Israel position was open.

4. Propaganda-wise, we succeeded at all levels. We persuaded our people that we had not gone to Madrid to capitulate and that we had not abandoned our historical rights, including our right to repatriation and to an independent state, or our reliance on resolutions 181 and 194. Our rhetoric was a lofty and comprehensive Palestinian national rhetoric and we succeeded in persuading the world of our just demands and our desire for peace.

We also succeeded in altering the Palestinian image in world public opinion, especially in the United States and in the west in general.

The greatest impact of our performance in Madrid was this immense change in the position of our people in the occupied territories, in the warm popular reception given the delegation in occupied Palestine, and in the retreat of Hamas forces at the popular level and the level of the masses.

Among the enemy masses, Madrid has increased the percentage of Israelis who are prepared to exchange land for peace in Palestine from 61 percent to 74 percent and of Israelis who wish to stop the settlement activity in order to enhance the peace process to 71 percent.

5. At the Arab level, we succeeded in establishing an approach to the peace process which balances Palestinian independence and Arab coordination based on our pan-Arab position. Consequently, we played a leading role within the Arab delegations. We also succeeded in effecting a balance between maintaining our place in the joint Palestinian-Jordanian delegation and underscoring our independence and our identity independent of this delegation.

With a distinguished performance and with full unity under the leadership of Chairman Yasser 'Arafat and the PLO Executive Committee, we succeeded in improving the conditions of the game and in using these conditions, unfair and unjust as they are, to achieve the best outcome possible. This accomplishment was aided by the U.S. Administration's wish to achieve progress that would be considered an accomplishment for it at a time when its economy is retreating and its elections are approaching.

There were negatives in Madrid. The Palestinian delegation, with all its advisers, was a very big delegation (130 individuals). Not enough time was available to create the organizational framework for the effort of all of them. There were also gaps in preparing for new positions which were difficult to foretell due to a lack of previous negotiating experience. But all this has resulted in beneficial lessons for the future.

The Washington Round

The Arab delegations in Madrid agreed to reject the Israeli request that the [bilateral] meetings be held in Israel and the Arab countries. The United States accepted the Palestinian logic that this would be in violation of the Geneva treaties which prohibit negotiation to determine the fate of an occupied country in territory under the control of the occupation. In its turn, Israel rejected Madrid because it bolsters continuity of the conference. This is why the issue of deciding the site for the next meeting was left to the sponsoring countries.

The United States chose Washington and it notified all the parties concerned while they were in Madrid itself. But Israel asked Washington to postpone the matter

until Shamir made his visit to the United States and met with President Bush in order to give the impression that selection of the site was done after consultation with Israel.

But the U.S. State Department announced the venue and date before Shamir met with President Bush. This angered Israel and pushed it toward a confrontation with the United States. So it announced that its delegation could not attend on the scheduled date (4 December) and that it would attend after Hanukkah, a Jewish holiday, i.e. on 9 December. But the United States persisted in the confrontation and announced that it would not change the date and that the meeting would be held on schedule.

The Arab delegations and Palestinian delegation agreed to the set place and date without any conditions so as to isolate Israel, to take advantage of its absence, and to reaffirm their commitment to the peace process.

But at this juncture, the U.S. Administration decided to alter the course and to slow down the pace. The direct reason for this change was the Administration's feeling that its obvious public pressure on Israel embarrassed the "strategic ally" and weakened the U.S. logic which had alleged for many years that the United States cannot pressure Israel; that if it did exert pressure, then this pressure would be counterproductive and would arouse the forces of the Israeli lobby, thus causing this pressure to backfire against the U.S. Administration itself. Successive American administrations have used this "game" against their Arab friends whenever these friends demanded that an administration pressure Israel in return for their friendship and their services.

Moreover, the U.S. Administration felt that Madrid led to a great boost in Palestinian optimism and to a threat to Israeli stability and that this development would weaken the U.S. ability to bargain with the Palestinians and the Arabs and would raise the price they would demand in the peace process. This U.S. change of heart was reflected in the U.S. conduct vis-a-vis the Palestinian victories in Madrid:

1. The U.S. Administration tried to separate the Palestinian delegation from its leadership by denying the field leadership appointed by the PLO leadership a presence in Washington similar to its presence in Madrid and by refusing to set up a hot line between the delegation and Chairman 'Arafat's office.
2. The U.S. Administration tried to help Israel downplay the distinguished Palestinian role which had underlined an independent Palestinian identity by reasserting the precedence and authority of the joint delegation and by belittling the importance of the "Palestinian track."
3. The United States ended its direct and open intervention and protected Israel from the consequences of its absence from the negotiations in the first five days.

4. The United States gave Israel a major propaganda victory by winning its ferocious political battle to abolish the [UN] resolution equating Zionism with racism.

5. The U.S. Administration put all its weight behind imposing an information blackout on the Palestinian delegation and the Arab delegations. On the other hand, it gave the Israeli delegation all the chances to show up in the media. All this happened during a week distinguished by racist Israeli acts, such as the acts of occupying homes in Suwein, escalating the oppression and settlement activities, and uprooting Palestinian cities.

The Palestinian delegation responded to this by boycotting the negotiations held on 4 December because they coincided with the fifth anniversary of the intifada. The Arab delegations acted in solidarity with the Palestinian delegation which criticized the occasion and performed prayers in the Washington Mosque and in Washington's churches for the soul of the martyred.

When negotiations started on 11 December, the Syrian and the Lebanese began their talks with the Israelis. The Palestinian and Jordanian negotiations could not begin because the Israelis refused to enter the two halls designated for negotiations with the two delegations on the pretext that they refuse to acknowledge the presence of a Palestinian delegation and a Jordanian delegation independent of the joint delegation and that the meeting could be held with one delegation only. U.S. officials refused to intervene to settle the problem. Because of the negotiation talks continued. So the two delegations devised a method where by the three delegation chairmen, i.e. 'Abd al-Shafi, al-Majali, and Rubein, would sit at a table in a corridor to negotiate over procedures. It must be understood that the root of the problem is the struggle over the independent Palestinian national issue. The Israelis, including Prime Minister Shamir, said: If we agree to an independent negotiation hall for the Palestinians, they will demand an independent state.

The dialogue focused on the rules of the game as stated by the U.S. invitation letters and letters of assurance and on what took place in Madrid.

We emphasized from the outset that we are an independent Palestinian delegation negotiating with the Israelis along an independent track, that we are entitled to propose any agenda we want, and that we will not confine ourselves to the transitional period procedures only. We also emphasized that our priority is to put a halt to the settlement activity, that no agreement can be reached on transitional procedures without this halt, and that we are not abandoning the joint Palestinian-Jordanian delegation but that this delegation's joint role vanishes when the bilateral negotiations begin, continuing just as a symbolic role with the addition of one or more Jordanian individuals to the Palestinian delegation moving along the Palestinian track and one or more Palestinian individuals to the Jordanian delegation moving along the Jordanian track. We also emphasized

that continuing such talks must be done with the agreement of all parties concerned and only in discussion for joint procedural issues.

Meanwhile, the Israelis continued to emphasize the joint delegation's preeminence, authority, and autonomy, asserting that there is no independent Palestinian delegation but a constituent committee from the joint delegation to draft a joint law, bring, transfer, arrangements for the transitional self-rule government.

We waged the battle of the national identity and of the independent agenda by waging a daily battle of procedures while the Americans kept themselves, remained, backed down in an intervention, and retreated from their role as a responsible sponsor, an honest broker, and a moving force. Amidst this total regression, they were putting all their weight behind the biggest battle for abolishing the resolution equating Zionism with racism so as to offer the resolution as a gift to Israel where Israel was denying the Palestinian people's movement, obstructing the peace process, and practicing racism on the ground in all parts of our occupied territories.

During the "note" negotiations, we expressed our willingness to move toward track meetings without any prior conditions, our willingness to attend and enter joint meeting after their agreement on to procedural agenda, and our willingness to open the track (meetings) agenda to include the transitional government procedures and other issues with which we are concerned, of which the most important is putting an end to the settlement activity.

The negotiations have led to some movement on the Israeli side:

1. The Israelis have recognized the three-chairmen framework as an important decision-making framework.
2. They have acknowledged that the standing committees emanate from the two tracks, not from the joint delegation.
3. They have acknowledged that the joint delegation is concerned with procedural issues and joint issues.

But major disagreements continue to exist on the matters of delegation membership, the need for equal terms, the need for joint agreement to hold meetings with the joint delegation, and on the need to give top precedence to the Palestinian and Jordanian track, each in its sphere.

Despite all the attempts to develop an agreement that would preserve our rights, our equality, and our national distinction, the Israeli side was determined not to reach agreement. This was exposed by Shamir's announcement that the Israeli delegation will not permit the inauguration of any fundamental negotiation and that it is not empowered to make any decision.

The Israeli delegation chief was content to address "tactical" letters to chairmen 'Abd al-Shafi and

Abu al-Saud al-Musall and to impact them several times in subsequent sessions. Finally, the final program aimed a mission that would move the parties concerned to the negotiation table.

The Americans maintained their negative stance.

Future Talks

The following have been defined as issues that could be discussed:

Arms control, border internationalization issues, economic development, and refugees. But to discuss the issue of internationalization of territories. The U.S. Administration considers the multi-party negotiation to bring implementation and not an alternative to the bilateral endeavor.

But do we expect manifestations to be made in the bilateral talks?

In fact, if the bilateral talks get to the issue of the matter, then what we expect is that Israel will continue holding its course.

We are also citing as one advantage of the transfer of powers which encompasses the people and the land, including Jerusalem, because we believe those powers remain from a legislative authority based on free elections. Moreover, international protection for the Palestinian people in the coming phase is an extremely important need.

We still expect progress to be made in the negotiations and expect the United States to play a more influential role. But there is no doubt that the United States is experiencing numerous influences, the most impact of which are the economic situation and Bush's position in the coming elections.

But regardless, enhancing our negotiating position requires that attention be devoted to:

Escalating the intifadah in a well-studied manner.

Developing the Arab position.

Boosting the European role.

To develop this role, it is necessary to have a quick response plan based upon our mutual interests with Europe at the international and regional levels. A political vision founded on justice and on establishing security and stability in the region can constitute the focal point for talks with the European countries aimed at reaffirming our identity and our rights and at bolstering our national economy on our land.

PLO Succession Plans Affecting Intifadah

Q. (044) 14 Paris AL & ATAN AL-ARABI in Arabic
1 May 87 pp 26-7

[Unattributed article: "Has a 'Coup' Taken Place Against Abu 'Ammar' Intifadah the Biggest Loser From Continued Absence of Leadership Alternative"]

[Text] When Yasar Arafat stood at the unification meeting of the Palestinian National Council (PNC) in Algiers in 1988, between Dr. George Habash and Nayif Hawatimah, the PNC members applauded at length. When members of the Popular Front and the Democratic Front entered the PLO's Executive Committee, Palestinians said that national unity was semi-complete. At that time, Dr. George Habash and Nayif Hawatimah did not give power to Yasar Arafat, who was expecting it for nothing. (In the contrary, it was a big price—as became evident—which was the most important of his articles, that the structure of the Palestinian institutions be redesigned. Pata's hegemony was to be reduced, in order to make room for the other organizations to play a role commensurate with their size, both in terms of population and in the struggle. Externally, the change took place for those organizations' benefit but, actually, we find that Yasar Arafat paid the price with his right hand in order to take it back with his left. After he spread his umbrella over his new guests in the Executive Committee and elsewhere, he was able to recruit some of them to side with the Arafat agenda, through his centralized authority. In fact, the affair was most similar to the covert coups inside those organizations. Neither Habash nor Hawatimah were able to demand that Yasar Arafat implement the most important agreement that had been concluded: to create a collective leadership for the PLO. Instead, Abu 'Ammar [Yasar Arafat] ignored this agreement and] forfeited some of his credibility, but won new loyalists to his policies, and exploited this gain very well to become president of the Palestinian state, even before the state was ready to be established.

The Big Question

Our attention turns to the big question which, like a lightning bolt, has struck Palestinians at all levels—leadership, organizations, individuals, and the intifadah. At the same time, it has struck Arabs and the world with nearly the same impact, especially those participating in and concerned with the peace process. That question is: What comes after Abu 'Ammar? The man has been PLO chairman since 1979. Every year, a new job is added to his tasks, until they have increased to more than 30. By his policies and diplomacy, the man has been able to walk over Arab mine fields and across closed borders from country to country. He breakfasts with those who are called "progressives," and dines with those termed "reactionaries." The man was able—in 1989—to convince Palestinians that they should track off from the National Charter, accept negotiations, and recognize Israel. Most recently, he has brought them through the bottleneck to full participation in the peace process.

Of course, the question has not been lost on everyone—just pushed out of sight by [Arafat's] willfulness and determination! In fact, the motive behind replacing him is Abu 'Ammar's personality, as those close to him are aware. One of these intimates told AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI: "Abu 'Ammar cannot bear anyone to say 'no' to him. Even if he is looking in the mirror, and he thinks that the one before him wants to say 'no,' he would smash the mirror! You make him happy, if you say 'yes.' He would tolerate you, if you said 'maybe,' but he would crush you, if you said 'no.'"

Palestinian Democracy

We asked the Palestinian leader, who is close to Yasir 'Arafat: You are always bragging about your democracy. Does your democratic practices stop at Abu 'Ammar? He replied: "Most unfortunately, yes. I don't want to tell you 'maybe.' This is the truth in a few words. As for the details, you know that Palestinians are forced to deal with all shades and colors, even if they are acceptable to everyone. For this reason, most nations of the world have recognized, first the PLO and, then, the Palestinian state. For this reason, as well, we can obtain support from all Arabs, and we can enter the French Elysee, the British Foreign Office, and even Buckingham Palace. When Shaykh Zayid Ibn Sultan Al Nuhayyan, president of the United Arab Emirates, was a guest of the British queen, he received Bassam Abu Sharif—do you remember?"

Are the qualities required for this role available in someone other than Abu 'Ammar?

"No. Have you read the statement of the Arab diplomat, who likened Yasir 'Arafat to the late Yugoslav president Tito, saying that Tito was able, through the force of his personality and relentless power, to hold together a mixture of different races in one country for more than three decades. Yasir 'Arafat does the same thing. On the contrary, he does more than that, with his ability to gather the Arabs around the Palestinians, despite differences in their policies and principles."

But Tito is dead, and now, Yugoslavia is dying. He said: "This is what we are afraid of vis-a-vis the PLO when 'Arafat goes! Who knows what will happen?"

Another Palestinian leader explained to AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI some of the ramifications of this matter. He stated: "We all know that Palestinian leadership is like leaderships in most Arab and Third World countries, concentrated on one man, derived from the power and control of one man. Yasir 'Arafat is not the only one who rules without a deputy or who occupies the number one seat, while the official who will succeed him occupies number 9 or 10."

I interrupted him: However, the late Abu Iyad [Salah Khalaf] was the number two man in the Palestinian leadership, and Abu Jihad [Khalid al-Wazir] was in nearly the same position. He replied: "This designation was not official. There was nothing to document it. He had no authority in the National Charter or elsewhere."

The Palestinian leader went on to say: "Let us examine the structure of Palestinian power centers. There is no doubt that certain historic leaders of the Palestinian struggle are difficult to recall, since they lag behind 'Arafat for reasons that everyone knows. We cannot conceive of Dr. George Habash or Nayif Hawatimah, despite our esteem for their efforts in the struggle, being in the number one Palestinian position. Furthermore, we don't expect this position to be occupied by anyone except a Fatah man, since it is the strongest and largest organization, in terms of popular base, on the Palestinian scene."

"Therefore, the chairman must be a Fatah man?"

"Certainly."

"Who is the candidate, then?"

"This is the problem. With the martyrdom of Abu Jihad and Abu Iyad, the strongest figures with leadership qualities, qualified to lead the PLO, have disappeared. Now in Fatah, there are three or four persons who are prominent by virtue of being founders of the Fatah Movement. They are: Faruq Qaddumi (Abu al-Lutf); Khalid al-Hasan (Abu al-Sa'id); Muhammad 'Abbas (Abu Mazin); and, Salim al-Za'nun (Abu al-Adib). However, each of these men would be a difficult choice. Qaddumi has a wide, popular base within Fatah. He is a politician committed to Palestinian principles, but lacks leadership qualities, of which the most prominent are the ability to be challenging, blunt, and decisive. You could say that Qaddumi is an important factor in the equation when the train is running, but he could not drive the train if it broke down."

"As for Khalid al-Hasan, he has vast Arab and international connections and belongs to the moderate line that has become dominant in a world without the Soviet Union. He is an experienced strategic thinker. He was the first to call for liberation from the restrictions of revolutionary theories, and he looks into the future from a realistic perspective. However, Abu al-Sa'id, in the minds of the radical Fatah leaders, is linked with the "reconciliatory, capitalistic" line, since he is the one who paved 'Arafat's peace path. He said to Abu 'Ammar: 'I think you should go on this path.'

"In any event, the question that poses itself at this point is: How strong are the radicals inside Fatah and is their strength great enough to keep Abu al-Sa'id out of the number one position in Palestinian leadership?"

"Abu Mazin has the leadership qualities to qualify to compete with anyone for the position. In addition, he preceded Khalid al-Hasan with his program of realism. He sent an initiative to the Israeli leftist parties and the Jewish peaceniks, but his Arab connections are not strong. The most important thing is that he does not have a large, popular base inside Fatah."

"Salim al-Za'nun—Abu al-Adib—is the last of Fatah's founders, but he was last, or disregarded in Fatah's viewpoint, in the recent Central Committee elections. His competitive position is not strong.

"There is also 'Abbas Zaki, who took over intifadah affairs after Abu Jihad was killed. He is a strong personality, noted for his inflexibility. However, he is not a founder of the Fatah Movement, and his popular base is not broad."

The Palestinian leader concluded by saying: "I don't want to anticipate anyone succeeding Abu 'Ammar, but I am confident that the PLO is not Abu 'Ammar. The people who sired him can beget a generation capable of continuing the progress."

Intifadah Leaders

At this point, the intifadah generation comes to the fore, or to be more precise, the intifadah leaders. Since the Madrid Conference, the Palestinian names that have been repeated by the international media, are Faysal al-Husayni, Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi, Hanan 'Ashrawi, Sa'ib 'Urayqat, Sari Nusaybah, and others, so that the names of the "fathers" have almost disappeared. There is no doubt that Israel played an unclean role, when it directed the media linked with it to talk about the Palestinian negotiating delegation as if it were an alternative leadership to the PLO. However, Israel did not create that from out of a vacuum. Those who are negotiating are the delegation members. Those who are discussing the occupied territories and conferring with Israelis are also the members of the delegation. Those with whom the United States is talking are also the delegation members. Are the delegation members assuming PLO leadership as they direct the negotiations, or will they direct the negotiations without the PLO, whenever the Palestinians fail to find an alternative to Yasir 'Arafat?

Of course, this question is not ill-intentioned or malicious. It is an analytical assessment of the reaction of leaders in the occupied territories to the incident of 'Arafat's plane crash, which brought many matters into focus or closer to reality.

Faysal al-Husayni said: "Yasir 'Arafat's absence would affect the Palestinian people in the coming stage, as well as the peace process. He is the true hero behind the peace process." Sa'ib 'Urayqat stated: "The hours of the disappearance of 'Arafat's plane were the most difficult and upsetting hours of my life. The responsibilities that Yasir 'Arafat bears are great. He is the only man capable of leading the Palestinians. His absence would be a tragedy and would leave a tremendous vacuum."

Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi spoke with his well-known wisdom and cool-headedness, with farsightedness and without sentimentality: "A democratic system must be created to choose Palestinian leaders. Matters should not be left to unexpected events. Leaving matters as they are opens the door to very negative possibilities which could produce a

rift among Palestinians. A new, agreed upon mechanism must be found to elect a new leader of the process and of the Palestinian state."

This call was echoed by the Jerusalem newspaper AL-NAHAR, which is widely distributed in the occupied territories: "It is necessary that Palestinian leaders, and Chairman 'Arafat himself, undertake a reconsideration and make preparations for someone to steer the ship in the future. A clear system of succession must be set up, as the peoples of the advanced world have done. What happened has proven the need to shift authority by constitutional means and to move rapidly when this transfer is dictated by events outside of human volition."

These positions make it clear that Palestinians in the occupied territories, who are now in the forefront of Palestinian action, will be those most harmed by 'Arafat's absence and by the possibilities of factional fissures. At that time, they will lose the legitimate, national umbrella for their work, and they will lose support for proceeding along the two paths of peace and the intifadah.

As for the ordinary Palestinian abroad, the traffic signal has ceased functioning, and he is stopped at a red light, asking: What if Abu 'Ammar dies?

The Palestinian Street

AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI has sought out the views of a varied segment of Palestinian people. One university professor said: "Continuing the present system of leadership signals a coming catastrophe. It exposes the PLO to great danger and makes the Palestinian issue merely a one-man issue, when it is actually an issue of land, people, a nation, and a future. It is the most complex world issue since World War II, and its leaders must agree on a new system for the chairmanship."

A longtime member of Fatah told AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI: "Since its foundation, the movement has been subjected to many convulsions which caused it to lose prominent and active elements. The cause of many of these convulsions was disparity of viewpoints and struggle for power. Abu 'Ammar continually emerged from them the primary beneficiary, until he had no competitors. I think that time no longer permits the continuation of this method. Moreover, the Palestinian structure can no longer endure more of these convulsions. We have entered the tunnel of peace. We are proceeding through the darkness without knowing where we are going. Perhaps a light will guide us to our goals or, perhaps, a flame will burn us."

A young man from one of the refugee camps said, nervously: "Abu 'Ammar must reach an agreement. We appreciate him for what he has given our cause. He is the leader, the symbol, but we will not permit the symbol to destroy what he has built, and what we have built with our blood and our sacrifices. The age is no longer the age of liberating peoples and placing nations on a new world map."

A prominent leader in one of the factions said: "We have often warned against the arbitrary way in which Abu 'Ammar exercises his leadership of the PLO. Many times we have tried to democratically redistribute the many powers he enjoys but, every time, we have been thwarted by a lack of appreciation for our far-sighted vision. Now, today, everyone understands our viewpoint and the danger that the PLO may be merely another Arab government with its chief on one side and its people on the other!"

For this reason, an Arab diplomat expects that the people of the intifadah will put more pressure on 'Arafat to find alternatives—to Yasir 'Arafat.

Rupture Scenario

The rupture feared by 'Abd-al-Shafi is represented by the following scenario, according to one diplomat:

- One part subordinate to Jordan, led by Abu Mazin, al-Tayyib 'Abd-al-Rahman, Faysal al-Husayni, and certain figures from the occupied territories;
- One part subordinate to Syria, led by Qaddumi, Nayif Hawatimah, Ahmad Jabril, and the rejectionist factions;
- One part subordinate to the Gulf, led by Khalid and Hani al-Hasan, and others; and,
- One part subordinate to Egypt, led by Nabil Sha'th], Abu al-Adib, and Sa'id Kamal.

This would mean, at the very best, the end of the PLO, with the Palestinians returning to pre-1964 condition, when the Alexandria Summit declared the PLO's establishment under the leadership of Ahmad al-Shuqayri. It would also mean nullifying a long phase of the Palestinian struggle, with all its accomplishments, martyrs, and sacrifices. It could, furthermore, mean the eruption of a new "Asifah," with more violent fedayeen operations, hijackings, etc. Will the Palestinians and, specifically, the PLO leaders be swept away in an ending such as this?

We doubt that there is anyone more eager to preserve the PLO than the Palestinians, or who would be more damaged by its passing. Therefore, the Palestinians today are confronting two choices:

Either they peacefully persuade 'Arafat to establish a democratic system for determining the chairmanship wherein a deputy is found to fill the vacuum of his absence, or force 'Arafat to take this step. At that point, the momentum would be either to overthrow him democratically or overthrow him militarily. Third World nations are not newcomers to coups.

If the man is persuaded to drop some of the reins by which he controls the PLO, he will thereby spare many Palestinians. But, if he is not persuaded, the PLO is not Yasir 'Arafat. 'Arafat is the "symbol" that could remain in the Palestinian people's memory, even without the presence of Yasir 'Arafat, "the whole."

The PLO's Central Council, which is organized like a small national assembly, combines Fatahists, Popular Frontists, Democratic Frontists, independents, and others. It was scheduled to meet the morning of Yasir 'Arafat's plane crash, but was postponed. Upon hearing the news of the crash, some said that Abu 'Ammar had used the plane drama to evade the council's demand, which everyone expected would be heated with regard to the chairmanship. But will the Central Council decide the issue of the chairmanship now? Will some escape from Abu 'Ammar's pocket and don the bigger Palestinian cloak, which is buffeted now by the winds of change?

EGYPT

Suez Free Zone Offered to Japan

92AF0830E London AL-HAYAH in Arabic
8 May 92 p 10

[Text] Cairo—Egypt has proposed to Japan the establishment of a free industrial zone in the Egyptian city of Suez as an alternative to Hong Kong.

Egyptian Minister of Housing Hasaballah al-Kafrawi told a delegation of Japanese businessmen visiting Cairo that "the proposed industrial zone would be subject to the same conditions now in effect in Hong Kong."

He said, "The industrial free zone will not be subject to Egyptian laws, but to a written agreement between the Egyptian Government and Japanese investors," that "any guarantees agreed upon by the two sides will be respected," and that "the investors will not pay customs duties or taxes."

Kafrawi pointed out that Egypt had cooperated with Japan before in several projects, most prominently the High Dam Lake, the cement industries in Bani Suwayf, health care projects in Cairo, and the construction of the port of Damietta [Dumyat].

He said that Japanese technology had shown great quality in those projects, and that Egypt looked to new projects to create jobs for its citizens. The minister described to the delegation Egypt's goal of building new civilized societies far from existing cities. He said, "The Egyptians are living on no more than 4 percent of Egypt's total land, leading to an urban population density that was beyond the capacity of electricity, health care, and drinking water."

Export Promotion Company To Form

92AF0784B London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
7 May 92 p 12

[Text] Cairo—In the next few days, the Egyptian parliament will discuss a plan to amend the law covering the Center for the Development of Egyptian Exports.

The amendment of the law comes in the context of the Egyptian Government's interest in encouraging and

developing existing executive agencies that deal with export activity in Egypt. The Egyptian parliament passed, in the past few days, to a bill to establish an export guarantee company, with capital of 50 million pounds, to insure Egyptian exports against commercial and non-commercial risks. The plan to amend the law covering the Center for Development of Exports is aimed at developing the activity of the center, which was founded in 1979. It mandates freeing the center from public hiring rules, so that it may seek out persons with the [appropriate] experience, ability, and educational level, and reshuffle the board of directors to ensure a suitable representation of the private sector enabling it to play an effective role in stimulating Egyptian exports. It also mandates a change in the center's legal status, ensuring its freedom from government rules and restrictions, just as with the law governing the Egyptian General Investment Authority.

The bill also generates activity to promote investment in export projects, activity to promote service exports and commodity exports, and to promote participation in preparing the state's export plan, as well as to direct the center's services of advice, information, and studies for all sectors—public, private, investment, and cooperative—to get the export wheel rolling in those sectors.

The center will be in charge of familiarizing the Egyptian export banking sector with export opportunities, customs regulations in foreign markets. It will also be in charge of developing cooperation with international, regional, and local organizations working in the export field.

The amendment of the law includes the formation of a board [of directors] for the center headed by the Minister of Economy and Foreign Trade. The head of the center's executive office will be his executive officer. The decision forming the board would come from the prime minister; the board would have 21 members, 10 of whom would represent the private sector.

Perspectives on Recent Incidents of Violence

Incubated in Urban Slums

92AF0745A *Cairo AL-AHRAM AL-DUWALI in Arabic*
6 May 92 p 3

[Article by Nabil 'Umar]

[Excerpt] The noisy clashes occurring between extremists and police in Imbabah and al-Munirah are no coincidence and should come as no surprise. It is wrong to think that the latest clash, the second of its type in less than a year, might finally signal the end of the violence in this area. On the contrary, the causes of this clash are still festering beneath the surface. The environment which produced these violent, anti-social characters has not improved!

Nor is it a coincidence that the victims and the perpetrators in the incident involving the girl from al-'Atabah

[neighborhood in northern Cairo] and the Imbabah rape incident are among the residents of Bulaq al-Dakrur [neighborhood], the hamlet of Awlad 'Allam, the area of al-Liwa' and Tabiq al-Diyabah. All of these areas are incubators for the germs of extremism, violence, deviance, and crime. These phenomena exact a heavy price from the members of society, whether or not one lives in those areas due to a nationwide shortage of housing or simply bad luck. Whenever the police intervene to curb activity and crime in those quarters, violent clashes break out. These incubators are the unplanned housing concentrations [i.e., slums] that surround Cairo like the wall around a traffic police island. Thus, Cairo is now like an unplanned city interspersed with a few planned neighborhoods. [passage omitted]

Nurtured by Lawlessness

92AF0745B *Cairo in Arabic* 27 Apr 92 p 4

[Article by 'Isamat al-Hawari, Lawyers' Union representative]

[Excerpt] Unrestrained behavior, chaos, recklessness, indifference, crimes of rape on the sidewalks, egotism, self-love, disdain for authority, violation of the law, the disappearance of responsible people, traffic jams, the abandonment of courtesy on the roads, taxis challenging the law, sidewalks broken up by public works, street corners which have become havens for loiterers, the obsession with fatal speed, uncovered drains, potholes and excavations, unlicensed construction activity, encroachments on state property, overflowing drainage ditches, garbage that attracts flies, noncompliance with traffic signals—these are the dregs of the Egyptian scene!

The reality affirmed by the Egyptian scene is that respect for the law has disappeared. Circumvention of the law has become widespread. People boast of violating the law. Responsible people are disappearing and have begun to be viewed as rarities. Compliance with the law has become the exception. Adherence to the law strikes a note of dissonance. Obedience to its provisions is now disapproved.

Every country's street is the address of its culture. Culture is based on responsible, not irresponsible, people.

Responsibility entails respecting others' rights before demanding others to respect your rights. It requires one to defer to the rights of society, even if doing so limits one's personal rights. The tragedies occurring on the Egyptian scene today, therefore, require us to restore respect for the law. This will come only by imbuing a feeling of responsibility in all citizens and teaching them adherence to the law!

When I refer to the absence of the law on the Egyptian scene, I am not at all referring to an absence of armored vehicles carrying soldiers armed to the teeth with the latest technical weapons. Nor do I mean police stations located in the main squares and streets. Rather, I am

referring to an absence of responsiveness to the law, which is an absence of the law itself. Responsible people have disappeared in the law's absence. Hence, the declining situation of the Egyptian scene today!

Egyptian society has reached a state of calamity and decline. We must all rush to save it and to re-fashion the life within it. True, the government is completely incapable of restoring respect for the law on the Egyptian scene. However, it is also true that Egyptian society belongs to all Egyptians. It is public, not private, property. Hence, we are all responsible for the tragedies and dangers which menace the Egyptian scene. We must rouse negligent officials to take action for the sake of the Egyptian society, instead of relaxing in their air-conditioned offices!

Persuasion, Not Intimidation

[passage omitted] It is wrong to think that the law derives its preeminence from the power of arms. Arms compel only through coercion, oppression, and intimidation. They might deprive you of your freedom, but they cannot deprive you of your convictions. A criminal brandishing a weapon is a source of intimidation; however, he will never be a recipient of honor. His weapon may frighten you, but his behavior will never win your respect. Hence, belief in the law is crucial to the law's effectiveness and validity!

Also, it is mistaken to think that the multiplication of laws will end crises and suffering. Having many laws is not the crucial point. The crucial point is for everyone to comply with the law. No one is immune from the law simply because he owns property or enjoys prestige, authority, or influence!

The presence of the law requires everyone to respect the law and tremble before it out of honor, not fear. It requires giants and tyrants to bow before it in humility. The law will have no force unless all are equal before it and believe that it expresses their will faithfully!

The law is absent on the Egyptian scene. Some individuals base their behavior on immunity from traffic laws. Privileged groups exempted from traffic laws are registered at the traffic administrations. They include employees of the Interior Ministry, the judiciary, the offices of the prosecutor general, and several other authorities!

The law is absent on the Egyptian scene even among those responsible for enforcing it. The police's violation of traffic regulations is a well known sight, especially their failure to obey traffic signals and stop signs!

In the law's absence, people behave as they please. Selfishness prevails, and personal right prevail over the collective right, which is the country's right!

All of us—judges, the judged, government supporters, and oppositionists—our consciences cry out for a resolute stand against this chaos which has eliminated respect for the law!

Who Is Responsible?!

Caliph 'Umar Ibn-al-Khattab, may God be pleased with him, is reported to have said: "By God, if a donkey falls in the Syrian Desert, 'Umar would be asked on the Day of Judgment: Why did you not pave the road for it?" If Caliph 'Umar Ibn-al-Khattab so courageously declared his responsibility for the collapse of a donkey on an unpaved road, who is responsible today for those who fall under the wheels of the Hulwan metro, who fall victim to the traffic disorder in the Egyptian street, whose houses collapse on top of them after being built by greed without a permit under the noses of officials, who fall into uncovered drains, or who fall victim to the potholes scattered on the sidewalks and roads? Who is responsible for the disdain and contempt for humanity on our public transport systems, the imperialism of taxis which challenge the law, and the chaos which prevails on the Egyptian scene today?!

Is it the responsibility of the government which has taken leave of Egyptian society and disappeared? Or is it the responsibility of citizens who have put themselves above the law? Or is it the responsibility of the media, which have been unable to instruct and raise citizens' consciousness? Or does responsibility lie with the political parties, none of which have offered solutions to the problems Egyptian society?!

The truth, I maintain, is that we are all responsible, albeit to varying degrees. We must realize that the dangerous phenomenon causing suffering and distress on the Egyptian scene is contempt for the law. It is leading to the extinction of responsible people!

Court Upholds Ban on Women's Group

92AF0856A Cairo *AL-AHRAM WEEKLY* in English
14-20 May 92 p 2

[Article by Khaled Dawoud: "El-Sa'adawi To Fight On"; italicised words as published]

[Text] A Cairo Administrative Court this week threw its weight behind a decision of the Ministry of Social Affairs to shut down the Arab Women's Solidarity Organisation (AWSA) for political and religious activities in violation of the Public Associations Law. AWSA is headed by Dr. Nawal El-Sa'adawi, a leading feminist.

The Association's activities violated Islamic law and religion, strained Egypt's relations with a number of Arab and Islamic countries and threatened social peace and security, the Court said.

The Court acted on an appeal by El-Sa'adawi against the Ministry's decision, taken on 15 June 1991, to close

down AWSA and turn over its assets to another association, called Women in Islam.

The Court also said that AWSA was acting illegally by opening foreign currency bank accounts without informing the Ministry of Social Affairs.

At a news conference at the Foreign Press Association (FPA), El-Sa'adawi argued that the Court's decision was politically motivated. While conceding that the Public Associations Law does not allow associations to indulge in political or religious activities, she pointed out that AWSA had functioned in the same way since it was founded in 1986 without running into any significant official protests.

El-Sa'adawi attributed the Court's decision to the "growing Islamic fundamentalist trend in Egypt and in the Arab world generally."

AWSA, through its periodical *Noun*, had supported a group of Saudi Arabian women who staged a demonstration last year demanding the right to possess driving licences. El-Sa'adawi also campaigned against the Gulf war and during the crisis visited Iraq, where she met members of the Iraqi Women's Federation.

The Court also took AWSA to task for publishing its magazine *NOUN*, without obtaining the prior approval of the Supreme Press Council. But El-sa'Adawi, at her news conference, asked why the publication of a magazine should require approval in a democratic country. She also wondered why the government, which tolerated fundamentalist newspapers, should oppose her magazine "which calls for improving the lot of women in Egypt."

El-Sa'adawi lambasted the Public Associations Law for prohibiting political activity, saying that the government wants women to be involved only in charity organisations.

But, she added, any issue related to women or to the public in general cannot be separated from politics. "Everything is political," she said, "even if we are asking for water purification, because we will have to ask the government for more funds and this is a political matter."

El-Sa'adawi also criticised the growing trend among women to wear conservative dress that covers their heads and arms. Fashion is not part of Islamic law, she said. "Women should unveil their minds," she said, advocating an enlightened interpretation of religion.

El-Sa'adawi has been a controversial figure and there are those among liberal intellectuals who oppose her methods of advocating women's rights. Such people argue that her attacks against what others consider an integral part of the Islamic tradition only produce negative results, restricting her ideas to a limited intellectual circle, viewed as "westernised."

The funding of AWSA also came up for criticism. El-Sa'adawi was reported to have received donations

from nongovernmental organisations and women's associations in the United States, the Netherlands, Sweden and other countries. At her news conference, she did not deny the existence of these donations.

An Egyptian writer, who asked that his name be withheld, said that what El-Sa'adawi advocates may be right. "But it seems that she appeals more to Western public opinion than to public opinion in Egypt, where the respect of tradition and religion is an inseparable part of the culture."

El-Sa'adawi, however, vowed to continue fighting for AWSA's survival, taking her case to a higher court. Meanwhile, she will return to writing novels—"my original job"—in addition to practicing psychiatry, she said.

IRAQ

Demarcation Line With Kuwait Discussed

92AE0441A London AL-WASAT in Arabic
1 Jun 92 pp 30-31

[Interview with an official of the UN committee tasked with demarcating the border between Iraq and Kuwait: "Iraq To Lose 880 Meters in New Border with Kuwait;" first paragraph AL-WASAT introduction; place and date not given]

[Text] An official member of the UN committee tasked with demarcating the border between Iraq and Kuwait, in an exclusive interview with AL-WASAT, revealed that Iraq will lose only 880 meters in the draft of the new demarcation line that this committee has sanctioned. In this interview, the official explained in detail the method of operation used by this committee, before it issued its decision last month, in demarcating the final map of the joint land border between Iraq and Kuwait. This committee is headed by an Indonesian official, and its members are independent experts from New Zealand, Sweden, and Indonesia, and representatives from Iraq and Kuwait. This official stipulated that his name not be used, in exchange for his agreement to talk to AL-WASAT, since the UN has forbidden any member of this committee to give press interviews because of security reasons. The following is the interview with this official.

[AL-WASAT] What basis did you use to demarcate the border line between Kuwait and Iraq?

[Official] We drew this line on the basis of the border version agreed upon in 1932 by the governments of Iraq and Kuwait. However, this version was extremely ambiguous. It only settled two questions: first, the point where the Kuwaiti-Saudi Arabian and Iraqi borders meet; and second, the demarcation line south of Safwan.

[AL-WASAT] If that version was ambiguous to that degree, how could it be used to demarcate the border?

[Official] We obtained all correspondence and documents dated back to 1913. We also used aerial photographs dated back to 1940. In these photographs, the old customs complex in Safwan can be made out. When we compare these photographs with modern aerial photography, we can determine the old posts of this center accurately. Aside from that, in 1942, a survey was commissioned by the British India Ministry. This survey determined the longitudinal and latitude lines of the customs point. Moreover, in 1940, there was also correspondence concerning a specific date palm. Consequently, we confirmed that the border is located one mile south of the customs complex, or 1,000 paces south of that date palm which, of course no longer exists today.

[AL-WASAT] Did anyone try to discover the position of the old border marker, since there was a famous sign that everyone knows?

[Official] Certainly not. We had agreed that there was no possibility of finding it. Iraq had complained in 1940 that the border had been shifted 250 meters to the north. We accepted that and that means that the line we worked to demarcate was located from 1,000 paces—which we consider to be 1,000 meters—to one mile, i.e., 1,690 meters, south of the southwestern edge of the customs complex. Therefore, there were two distances we worked on the basis of: the first measured 1,250 meters, considering the 1,000 paces and the Iraqi complaint in 1940; and the second, 1,690 meters, or the equivalent of one mile. We considered that it would be fair to average the two distances and, consequently, we drew the demarcation line 1,430 meters south of the southwestern edge of the old customs complex.

Maritime Boundary Problem

[AL-WASAT] What is the reason for the new line being located a greater distance north on the present official map?

[Official] The previous border was drawn on the basis of the British map, which was submitted to the Security Council. It was strange that this map was biased toward Iraq, because it showed the border located 2,200 meters south of the customs complex. In 1991, the British side agreed that there was no justification for putting the line at that distance. In that way, Iraq was allowed to gain 880 meters of land without having any right to it.

[AL-WASAT] What are the other points that were demarcated?

[Official] The line located in the upper al-Batin area was demarcated west of the Safwan line, in the direction of the sea. It then slants to intersect the inlet [al-khawr].

[AL-WASAT] Didn't the maritime channels between the two countries change over the years?

[Official] Oddly, they did not change greatly. The maritime map, drawn up in 1920, has not changed very

much. In fact, Britain also believed that the maritime lines had changed, but it has backed off that position.

[AL-WASAT] Was that the reason for the rumors that Iraq would lose the port of Umm Qasr?

[Official] Perhaps that's correct. The maritime demarcation line there is closer to the Kuwaiti side, which the Kuwaitis applaud. In the end, Iraq's delegation was very happy, while the Kuwaiti delegation adopted a defensive position. In fact, the Kuwaiti delegation caused an uproar in the meeting where the basic line was approved, when they realized what this line meant. In the end, members of that delegation rushed out of the meeting room to the 38th floor (where the office of UN Secretary General Dr. Butros Ghali is located). They demanded that he intervene.

[AL-WASAT] Did he, in fact, intervene?

[Official] He summoned the committee members to meet with senior officials at 0945 on that day. However, the chairman of the committee, [Mukhtar Kosoma-Atimidja], stuck to his position, saying that the committee was independent and was doing the job it had been given. The upshot was that our respect for him increased 100 percent.

[AL-WASAT] The demarcation line at Umm Qasr passes through the middle of the naval base and gives Kuwait the Iraqi barracks there. It is also clear that Kuwait is also given a part of the al-Rumaylah oil field. Did you take that into consideration?

[Official] Certainly not, since none of the maps that we worked with clearly showed the locations of oil fields, with the exception of the customs complex in Safwan. We also ignored any existing installations there. The maps we worked with only showed the contours of the land. If the border had passed through harbor installations themselves, perhaps certain efforts could be made to reach a compromise. However, this line only passes through barracks. Therefore, we were committed to it. The actual point in the sea is the same as the point located on British maps. The chairman of the Iraqi delegation said that the demarcation line in the al-Batin area passes through the fruit orchards and gardens there. He added: "If you think that putting a marker to show the border position inside the house of an Iraqi farmer will lead to strengthening peace and security, you must think again. If you believe that dividing fruit orchards, owned by a certain family for several generations, will help to achieve security and peace, think again."

[AL-WASAT] How did you decide the demarcation line in the al-Batin area?

[Official] We used the desert wadis.

[AL-WASAT] But, a desert wadi is not like a river basin or a navigable canal. On the contrary, it is constantly changing in nature.

[Official] To resolve this problem, we used computers for the topographical survey. This determined the depth of the points in the contours, and demarcated the line on a map within a measurement of 50 centimeters. Despite that, the line totally zigzagged. Consequently, we made each part of it straight for a distance of two kilometers, on the basis that neither side would lose or gain any land at the other's expense.

[AL-WASAT] Did Iraq and Kuwait agree to that?

[Official] Iraq has refused completely to take part in the technical side of the committee's work.

[AL-WASAT] The committee's job includes placing markers on the land showing the border. How will this line be marked?

[Official] Posts will be placed to show the location of the border. Each post will be two kilometers apart. However, we will not place these posts until summer is over, inasmuch as no one wants to work there with that intense heat. These posts will be placed on foundations of reinforced concrete, and will be one meter high. We had to lower the standard of these posts' specifications, because the bids were extremely high, from \$300,000 to \$1.5 million.

[AL-WASAT] What do you still have left to do?

[Official] We still must do more survey work in the northern part of the al-Batin area. There is also the maritime border question. Iraqi and technical experts say that this question is not within our purview. However, Kuwait wants us to do it. It is incumbent upon the Kuwaitis to obtain the Security Council's agreement to expand the scope of the committee's mission. If, in fact, Kuwait is able to obtain the Security Council's agreement in this regard, the committee will need new experts. Our available technical expertise is all based on land boundaries. Demarcating maritime maps requires completely different skills. We must also still prepare a report for the UN secretary general. We were unable to prepare a report this time, because the United States State Department refused to allow the Iraqi delegate to enter the United States until two days before the scheduled meetings, limiting his stay to only two days after the meetings. Therefore, we were unable to extend the last meeting.

[AL-WASAT] Iraq has not accepted the new border. Does that not force the committee members to think that they perhaps have drawn a line upon the sand that may begin a future war?

[Official] I believe that they sometimes think that, but matters call for optimism. This is the first time that such detailed maps of that region have been drawn. With the implementation of computer-measuring processes, these maps have become precise, with no percentage of error of more than two centimeters. Consequently, there will be, at the least, detailed maps of that area, as a result of this committee's work. However, we feel that this is the

best possible and fairest way to demarcate the line between these two countries. If we take into account the information available to us, Iraq's loss of land will not exceed 880 meters. On the other hand, Kuwait is not pleased either.

Tariq Aziz on Changes in International Order

92AE0425B Baghdad AL-THAWRAH in Arabic
21 May 92 pp 3, 6

[Article by Tariq Aziz: "The Current International Situation: Facts and Possibilities; Proceedings of the Second Intellectual Symposium for the Culture and Media Bureau in the National Command of the Socialist Arab Ba'ith Party"]

[Text] The so-called world order, until the last part of the eighties, was based on factors which developed after World War II. It was also based on other factors which had developed and evolved in the fifties, sixties, and seventies, particularly in Asia and Africa. The most important of these factors had to do with the large number of African and Asian countries which had broken free from the yoke of colonialism. Other factors include the birth of the movement of non-aligned nations and the emergence of a new and important role for the oil producing countries, which are considered Third World countries.

This is a general description of the situation that existed before 1990.

It was in that situation that nations striving for political and economic independence and for development and progress in a variety of fields found some opportunities to realize one portion or another of their goals. On the one hand, they tried to achieve those goals by utilizing what was available to them of their own resources and capabilities. On the other hand, they also utilized surrounding regional and international conditions.

It was also in that situation that some measure of protection from attempted aggression was provided by international organizations, the UN General Assembly in particular; by regional and private organizations, such as the Organization of African Unity [OAU]; by the Arab League; and by the Movement of Non-aligned Nations. Although this protection was limited, nations striving for political and economic independence received some protection from attempts made by imperialist countries, the United States and western countries in particular, to dominate them politically, economically, and militarily. These organizations also served as forums which were used by countries that had recently become independent to articulate their problems and concerns. Consequently, these countries managed to achieve some favorable results.

Many countries in Asia, Africa, and Latin America benefited in that situation from the rivalry and hostility which existed between the United States and the western camp, [on one side], and the Soviet Union and its eastern

camp [on the other]. They managed to achieve a measure of independence, and they managed to receive the economic, military and technical assistance which had not been made available to them previously. The gains that some of these Asian, African, and Latin American countries made in certain cases and under certain circumstances by taking advantage of this rivalry were very important.

Under the present circumstances, however, we must not go so far in describing the favorable aspects of the situation which existed previously that we come close to characterizing it as ideal. It was a situation that was very complicated and difficult for countries which had recently become independent. In general, however, that situation was undoubtedly better than the one which we have now, the one which developed after the end of the eighties.

The Zionist entity was established in Palestine under the previous situation, and the United States and some western countries provided that entity with much of the protection it needed. They also provided it with much of what it had to have to expand and commit aggression.

Racist regimes continued to be strong under those circumstances, and they continued to enjoy the protection they were actually getting from reactionary forces in the world.

Under those circumstances, the economic crisis in Third World countries got worse with the passage of time, and the vast difference in the standard of living between the North and the South became greater. The level of debt in Asian, African, and Latin American countries soared, and development in many of these countries came to a standstill.

Much of the surplus oil funds was looted directly and indirectly under those circumstances by the major capitalist countries, particularly the United States and western countries.

Many acts of aggression and wars were waged by America and by western imperialist countries and their clients under those circumstances. There was no military deterrent against those wars, nor was there even an effective political deterrent. There were repeated "Israeli" attacks against the Arab nation; there were American attacks against Grenada, Panama, and Libya; and Britain waged war against Argentina.

Notwithstanding the shortcomings of the previous situation and its complexities and difficulties, the present situation is more difficult and more severe for all Third World nations and countries and for the Arab nation in particular.

What are the most important characteristics of the present situation?

The United States, which had maintained its post World War II position as the greater superpower in the world, is now the only superpower in the world. After World War

II the United States continued to be the most technologically advanced and the most economically powerful country, even though it did fall behind in some areas when compared to other capitalist countries, particularly Japan and Germany. Now, no other superpower is confronting the United States, competing with it, or counterbalancing its military and political power.

It is true that under the previous situation the United States maintained its leadership role among the group of western countries through its leadership of the NATO alliance after World War II and also through its leadership of other political and military groups in many parts of the world. And yet, that leadership was sometimes challenged or violated. Some members of the western alliance would occasionally exercise some measure of independence from the United States. Such things happened under circumstances such as those of the Vietnam war and the struggle in the Middle East. Under the present situation, however, the United States is exercising its leadership role more forcefully than it did in the past. So far, none of the western countries has been able to mount any serious opposition to America regarding any political, military, or economic issue it insists on deciding.

One of the gravest developments of the current situation is the control which the United States exercises over the UN Security Council and the United Nations Organization.

In theory, the UN Charter gave the organization many tasks and mandates to carry out, but these tasks and mandates remained idle or restricted because of the balance which existed in the past. Neither America nor the Soviet Union could use the UN Security Council or other UN agencies to achieve unilateral objectives. Other superpowers could not do that either since one of the permanent members of the Security Council would use its veto power to thwart any such attempt which might be made by one of its opponents. That is why most UN resolutions, particularly Security Council resolutions, were somewhat balanced since they took into account the interests and concerns of the parties involved.

But when that balance ceased to exist, the United States and its western allies, particularly Britain and France, found that they were able to get their political wishes expressed in resolutions issued by the Security Council and by other UN bodies and agencies. These resolutions were issued without opposition from others (Russia and China). In fact, Russia has been taking part in making those resolutions, but as far as China is concerned, the most that may be said about it, is that it would abstain from voting.

The danger of such a development lies in the fact that American and western imperialist policy, once expressed unilaterally and openly, but without the cover of international legitimacy provided by the United Nations, now is being sanctioned by the United Nations.

Although this UN sanction is superficial and hollow, it has been given to the United States for the resolutions which it wants passed against Iraq in particular.

This serious development gave America and its western allies the capability with which it could blackmail the world—something it did not have in the past. Thus, the struggle against American and western imperialist policies and objectives has become much more difficult as well as much more complicated than it used to be.

The economic crisis from which Third World countries suffered have become worse. These countries are no longer capable of using the international forums which they utilized in the past to achieve some favorable, albeit partial and meager results. These countries no longer have those opportunities which they could use in the past to take advantage of the rivalry between the two camps and between the countries of the western camp itself. All the doors that used to be open to them have now been shut, and what they are facing now is a dominating and greedy imperialist, capitalist world which is working in many ways to avenge the political, economic, and military defeats it suffered at the hands of revolutions and national liberation movements. That world is trying to bring back the old colonialism; it is trying to dress it up in new clothing and to arm it with new techniques.

The important question is this: Is this a permanent and final situation? What are the realistic possibilities in the coming stage? Principals and promoters of American imperialism who are joined by pro-American politicians, rulers, and writers in some countries are promoting the notion that the present age is the American age. America did win its victory over communism and socialism, and its foremost competitor in the universe is no longer in the race. America has thus become the military, political, and economic master of the whole world. That situation is permanent and final.

Proponents of that view call upon others to accept this situation and to deal with it as an inescapable fact. In the Arab homeland, the Egyptian regime and its propaganda machine are the leading proponents of that tendency. They are joined by rulers, politicians, and writers in other Arab countries, those in the Arabian Peninsula and in the Gulf in particular.

But those who are using such terms to describe the current international situation are not describing the situation objectively. Instead, they are promoting this description deliberately to ensure total American dominance is achieved without the effort which would have to be made to paralyze the will of nations to resist this domination. This description of the current international situation is being promoted deliberately to portray resistance to American dominance as an exercise in futility.

But how can the objective facts in the current international situation be separated from the claims made by observers of American imperialism and by its advocates in the world and in the Arab homeland in particular?

We pointed out the most important characteristics of the current international situation. America is now undoubtedly the foremost power in the world. And yet, there are other facts besides this one [that are associated with the current international situation].

First, one of the most important facts about the current international situation and how it differs from the previous one which developed after World War II is this: The new international situation developed in a very short period of time and took the whole world by surprise, including the United States itself. It is true: the capitalist camp under America's leadership did fight a political, ideological, and economic war against the Soviet Union and its camp for several decades. The purpose of that war, which was sometimes fought in the media and sometimes fought by the military, was to undermine and destabilize the Soviet camp and put an end to communism there. Its purpose was to recapture what the Soviet Union had won in Europe and in the world. But the United States and its western allies did not expect to achieve anything more than partial results in that regard. Achieving all these goals which they did achieve was something they could hardly imagine. What happened, however, is that the communist system in eastern Europe collapsed within two years, and that was followed by the collapse of the communist system in the Soviet Union. This is a situation which is radically different from the one which developed after World War II. The war had lasted from 1939 to 1945. The Nazi regime was expected to fall several years before it did. It was expected to fall after Germany's military expansion was rolled back and Germany retreated on all the fronts where it had been fighting the allies. Before the war ended, allied leaders, particularly the leaders of America, the Soviet Union, and Britain, discussed the future of the international system after Germany's defeat were final. These discussions took place in the course of several conferences which were held in Tehran, Yalta, and Potsdam. The allied leaders established the United Nations, laid its cornerstones, agreed on establishing balance in the Security Council, and agreed on the veto privilege. The situation which developed after 1990 took everyone by surprise. Neither the United States nor the countries which were involved in bringing it about have been able to examine it in depth or agree on its principles and cornerstones. All these countries have been frantically trying to keep up with the unexpected and rapidly developing events. So far, they have not been able to catch up with those events, nor have they been able to come to grips with their consequences.

Second, the United States, Britain, and a number of western countries are describing the current international situation and calling it "a new world order." Regardless of its ethical or moral content, this alleged new order, which, as we said, came on the scene unexpectedly, does not in fact constitute "order" in the true sense of the word. Order implies permanence, stability, clarity of principles and goals, and the existence of a dominant power to guarantee the stability of the system.

What the facts and events confirm, however, is that this alleged new order has been on the international scene for no more than a few years.

Anyone observing the international scene today finds that conditions in many parts of the world are not characterized by permanence. In fact, these conditions are changing, deteriorating, and breaking up rapidly. In many cases the changes are unexpected and uncontrolled. Although it is true that the United States and its western allies are now playing active roles in bringing about these conditions, the changes, the deterioration, and the fragmentation which are now taking place do not give the American and the western role the leverage that is needed to make that role a dominant one that can control these changes and dictate their outcome.

What is happening now in Yugoslavia and in many parts of the world affirms that local forces and indigenous circumstances which are leading to the deterioration and fragmentation there are more powerful than America and its Western allies in their desire to control the situation and turn it around to serve their interests. In most instances the unexpected changes, the deterioration, and the disintegration are beyond America's actual ability and the ability of its western allies to control and to exploit for their own ends. The international scene is such that it is possible to predict that the changes, the deterioration, the disintegration, and the local conflicts could expand. This fact is undermining the foundation of the order theory which is being promoted now. The only support for this theory comes from the ability that America and its western allies have to use discretion when dealing with specific cases and to turn these cases around in their favor. This is what happened in the aggression against Iraq and the embargo against Libya. Such an ability does not necessarily mean, however, an order that would be universal and permanent. Nor does it mean that such actions could be repeated continuously. What is certain is that America wants these examples to intimidate others so they will accede to its wishes, obviating thereby the need for direct intervention on its part. Such intervention would involve political and military efforts as well as exorbitant financial costs. It is difficult, however, to spread universal fear throughout the world for a long period of time, particularly among forces and parties where America would not choose to launch a direct military strike. This is the case today in Yugoslavia, Afghanistan, Somalia, and other countries where deterioration, disintegration, and local conflict spreading like wildfire.

Third, when we are dealing with the world's current circumstances, we have to remember the conditions which existed before and during World War II. The two camps which came together then were different in their nature from the two which developed after the war. The struggle in World War II started between the major capitalist countries themselves. Britain and France were on one side and were later joined by America; and Germany, Japan, and Italy were on the other side. The

Soviet Union tried to stay out of that struggle by concluding a treaty with Germany, and yet it was Germany that forced the Soviet Union to become involved in the war.

Although limited signs of conflict and struggle between capitalist countries began to appear following World War II, the possibility that this conflict and struggle between capitalist countries could grow and mushroom is realistic; it is neither hypothetical nor wishful thinking. The conflict could grow because the communist regime, which fell in Russia and in eastern Europe, is no longer posing a political, economic, and ideological threat to western capitalism. It is not posing a threat to the capitalist countries themselves or to Europe and the world. Furthermore, the nature of Russia's nuclear and conventional military power has shifted from being that of a rival posing a threat to the West to one lacking specific goals. And yet it is true that this conflict and this struggle are not today's "hot potato." It is also true that America and its western allies, Britain and France in particular, remain allies. They demonstrated that alliance forcefully in the aggression against Iraq and in the position that was taken on Libya. Nevertheless, the main reason for this alliance is not the overall, solid agreement between America and its western allies about streamlining and apportioning their interests and their benefits in a manner that all the parties to the western, capitalist alliance would find satisfactory. That is not the main reason for the alliance. The main reason for that alliance lies in the fact that the stunning developments and events in the Soviet Union and in eastern Europe took the major capitalist countries by surprise. The United States dealt high-handedly with those events and exploited them to make a profit very quickly.

At the present time pressure is being exerted on all the capitalist countries by the controversial effects of America's aggression against Iraq and by the lack of stability in Russia and in the former Soviet republics. These capitalist countries are being forced to go along with America to avoid any harm it might cause them. They are going along with America because they fear surprises and dangerous possibilities which they did not count on.

That is why, given this new and unexpected situation, these major capitalist countries have not yet been able to determine what their future interests, strategies, and roles will be. However, these countries cannot continue to be mere followers of the United States. It is certain that gradually they will be seeking direct, indirect, controversial, or noncontroversial methods to try free themselves from American domination, to break away from it. They will seek those methods so they can chart their own goals and policies. This process, which is yet to be launched on a large scale and is yet to emerge on the international stage as a strong political phenomenon, does in fact exist. It is manifesting itself now particularly in disputes over economic issues and environmental issues between America on the one side and Japan or western Europe on the other.

In addition to these basic facts about the current international situation, there is one major question which must be studied in depth and monitored in earnest. The question is this: Can America actually continue to be the military, political, and economic master of the world? Can it dictate its wishes to the whole world because it is now the only superpower?

The answer to this question requires that one study the factors that constitute America's strength and weakness.

First, the Military Factor

America is now the foremost military power in the world. When its military power is compared to that of any other single military power, the vast difference between the two becomes evident. That difference is especially evident now that Soviet military power has declined and its decline is likely to continue. If, however, we were to take the world as a whole, we would find that now many of the world's countries have tremendous military capabilities, including nuclear weapons. Although these countries cannot yet assert themselves globally and cannot do what the Soviet Union did in counterbalancing American military power, they are certainly asserting themselves in a regional framework and in more than one region of the world. It is that which is curbing America's general military dominance over the world. It is that which is giving these countries the capability to maintain their power and to use it now or in the future, not necessarily with America's consent and approval, to achieve results that would be in their interests. America cannot interfere militarily in every situation. It cannot do what colonialist empires used to do in the past before the 20th century to check any rebellion or impose total control over one country or another or one region or another.

Contrary to what promoters of America's new world order theory are saying, the example presented by the aggression against Iraq is not likely to be repeated. What gave America the ability to mobilize a large military campaign against Iraq cannot be available in every situation which might develop. In addition to the tremendous political, diplomatic, and media effort which was made by America to pave the way for the aggression, the costs of a military campaign, such as that which it launched against Iraq, would have been prohibitive had they not been underwritten primarily by Saudi Arabia and the countries of the Gulf. Japan and Germany were the secondary underwriters of those costs. Also, access to land may not be available elsewhere as it was in this case where land was made available by Saudi Arabia, the sheikhs of the Gulf, and Turkey. The aggression against Iraq was also associated with financially and economically valuable American and western interests that are very important to America and its western allies, namely, the oil interests. That is why the political, military, and media investment that was made in the campaign against Iraq was tremendous. It was commensurate with the financial and economic value of its objective. What America wanted was control over the oil

in the Arabian Peninsula and the Gulf. That was the financial and economic reason for its action. But since not all parts of the world are rich in resources, America cannot lead large military campaigns everywhere in the world.

That is why America will use intimidation and blackmail to get the political and economic results it wants. It will not always resort to using its military might to achieve those results, as it did in the aggression against Iraq. Although America may be able to get what it wants for some time by using intimidation and blackmail, it cannot continue using these methods effectively forever because whatever makes America's capability strong or weak in the new world order will become known to the relevant parties who will calculate their moves and actions accordingly.

Second, the Economic Factor

On the economic side one very important question is to be asked: Can the American economy afford the costs of maintaining such a maximum level of military power in America? Can the American economy afford to pay the cost of having the control over the world, of playing the role of policeman and protecting the order which America wants to impose on the world?

One of the basic facts about military power in the modern age is this: It is not enough to spend large amounts of money for a certain period of time until the required military might is achieved. Spending on military power must be maintained so it can be protected from erosion and deterioration. Any reduction in spending on military power will not only reduce its rate of growth, but will also reduce its power. That is why America will have to spend large sums of money to maintain its military power at its present standard which is superior to that of any other military power in the world. Given the fact that America is no longer engaged in an arms race with the Soviet Union and may not want its military might to grow, it will still have to spend large sums of money if it wants to maintain its present military might.

We have to remember that massive military spending was one of the foremost factors that led to the internal collapse of the Soviet Union. Because of its arms race with America, the Soviet Union had to spend large sums of money, beyond what it could really afford. Such spending impoverished the Soviet people, kept their country's economic infrastructure backward, and made the country incapable of renovating that infrastructure. These phenomena, which afflicted the Soviet Union in the past, are becoming evident today in the United States itself. Although the situation in the United States is not as critical as it was in the Soviet Union, these phenomena are quite clearly there. Although the crisis in the Soviet Union has been around since the early seventies, the Soviet leadership did not deal with it, continuing instead a policy of massive military spending to keep the Soviet Union's position as a superpower. When Gorbachev came along, he

tried at first to deal with the crisis piecemeal, but as soon as he acknowledged its existence, it turned into a genie: it escaped from the bottle and could not be put back into it. In certain respects the situation today in the United States resembles that which existed in the Soviet Union in the seventies. The characteristics of the U.S. situation, however, are American.

The deficit in America's domestic budget is phenomenal, and no American administration has been able to bring it under control. So far, there is no evidence that it can be brought under control in the foreseeable future. America's foreign trade deficit is also tremendous. Although the American economy is gigantic by all standards, one of its gravest economic facts is the fact that America has been buying and continues to buy more products from abroad than it sells. No American administration has been able to bring this deficit under control and to limit it. There is no evidence anyway that it could be brought under control.

These two grave facts, the domestic debt and the foreign deficit, pose the most serious domestic threat to America's military might and its superior political position in the world. The world has not known a viable empire capable of imposing its military and political domination without strong and stable economic support. It is very important to note that America continues to have a domestic debt problem and a foreign deficit problem despite its achievements, namely, its success in gaining total control over the oil in the Arabian Peninsula and the Gulf and in rifting surplus funds in Saudi Arabia and in the sheikhdoms of the Gulf. How America will deal with this dangerous deficit, however, remains to be seen.

Decisive action to limit military spending is the only way to deal with the domestic budget deficit. If America were to do that, it would not continue to be the world's military and political master. Decisive action to limit purchases from abroad is also the only way to deal with the foreign deficit. But if America were to do that, it would be destroying one of the most important principles of capitalism upon which the American capitalist system is based, namely, the principle of free trade. Realistically speaking, the nature of the American political system is such that radical measures of this kind would not be allowed.

No American president would dare take such decisive steps, which would be tantamount to major surgery on the economy. But if a president who wanted to take such steps were to come on the scene, his party would stand in his way. So would Congress and the many centers of power, particularly the military industrial complex whose influence in America is tremendous. Such a president would not be able to stay in office more than 4 years, and that would not be long enough to bring about radical change in the country's economy. That is why the two main flaws in the structure of the American economy will continue and will get worse. Unlike the empires of old whose decline went on for centuries, America will not have to wait for centuries or decades to

face its moment of truth. The modern age, the age of speed, is a double-edged sword with chaotic breakdowns appearing as quickly as orderly accomplishments.

Third, the Domestic Political Factor

The old colonialist countries, like Britain, France, and other colonialist countries built a very large military power to guarantee themselves control over their colonies and to ensure a superior international position.

It was quite obvious that these countries found that the money they spent on their military power and on their superior political role was a definitely rewarding economic investment. The fortunes these countries made from their colonial policy benefited not only the social class in control, but also the working class and the lower middle class as well. That is why support for the colonialist policy of the ruling class in these countries continued to be strong and stable.

But in the second half of the 20th Century signs of weakness started to appear in the British, French, Portuguese, and Dutch empires, some of which had endured for several centuries. While the level of Britain's and France's military might declined markedly in contrast to its previous level, Portugal and the Netherlands lost their status as dominant powers altogether.

This fundamental shift in the international situation, which came about in the second half of the 20th century, was not caused exclusively by the emergence of the Soviet Union and its socialist camp as a rival to these colonialist countries, nor was it caused purely by the emergence of a national liberation movement. There were but two of the factors which led to that shift. One of the most important reasons for it, however, was the high cost which these colonialist countries and their societies had to bear to maintain their military and politically superior role. These countries could no longer afford the economic costs of maintaining that role. In other words, investing in the military and political role, which was rewarding in the past, is no longer rewarding, and continued investment in that regard may bring about severe economic and social crises. The ruling political institutions in Britain and France were therefore compelled to rearrange their priorities to ensure domestic stability and homogeneity. This caused them to abandon some of their colonies, to reconsider the colonialist method, and to be satisfied with a military and political role that is smaller than the one they had in the past.

The United States, which emerged as the largest imperialist power in the 20th century, particularly after World War II, experienced a major economic boom before and after World War II. America was a very wealthy country before the war. After the war it became the wealthiest country. Despite the fact that isolationism continued to exist in America and to manifest itself in one degree or another in every decade of the 20th century before and after World War II, the ruling establishment in America,

and particularly the military industrial complex there, managed to prove for several decades after World War II that the growth of America's military might and the enlargement of its political role would bring about significant economic gains for everyone in American society.

Although these gains continued for several decades, they are no longer guaranteed. All the signs indicate that the living standard of an American citizen is falling and that the ruling establishment cannot conceal that decline in the standard of living. The standard of health, education, and social care services is also declining. At the present time the United States is facing serious problems because of an inability to come up with the necessary funds to modernize the infrastructure it had built during previous periods of prosperity, that is, roads, bridges, and railroads. In addition, America is facing environmental problems which are getting worse.

The question of racial discrimination in America is not the only one raised by recent events in Los Angeles. America has been a racist society ever since blacks were brought to America as slaves to work on white people's farms. What happened in Los Angeles reflected in a dramatic and provocative manner the economic frustration and despair which are felt by a growing percentage of the population in America. While blacks and other minorities in America may be affected more than others by this situation, they are no longer the only ones who are affected by it. White Anglo-Saxons and middle class Americans as well are now being affected by unemployment and by the declining standard of living.

The current administration under President Bush is still trying to mislead the American public by claiming that all the military, political, and economic elements of America's current foreign policy are still economically profitable for America. However, the administration's success in misleading the public has been limited.

America is now facing what Britain and France faced in the fifties. It is facing severe economic and social crises because it is clinging to a military and political role which the American economy cannot afford.

What the United States is experiencing now is exactly what Britain and France experienced in the fifties and sixties when there was a strong domestic tendency in both countries to reduce and limit the foreign military and political role to one which the country could afford economically and its society could tolerate. What is happening now in the United States, particularly during the elections campaign, is a rising tide of discontent with American foreign policy. America is being urged now to pay attention to its domestic affairs. It is being urged to limit superpower expenditures so that it can save funds it can then use to deal with the problems of unemployment and solve those of health care, education, social care, and the environment. America will find itself faced with two choices. It can either decide in favor of domestic concerns and limit its foreign role, or it can continue to play

the foreign role at a very high price. If it continues to play that role, the country's domestic, economic, and social crises will get worse. Domestic instability will ensue, and that, in turn, will limit America's foreign role.

Fourth, the Foreign Policy Factor

America's role in the world will be limited by domestic factors that are very important. Similarly, a number of foreign factors will produce the same outcome.

1. The United States developed its political and diplomatic capability, its capability in the information field, and its experience in foreign policy over several decades. These capabilities were developed based on the balance which existed [in the world] before the collapse of the Soviet Union and the communist camp in eastern Europe.

In most cases American foreign policy looks at matters in terms of black and white. The American political establishment has not demonstrated that its knowledge of world affairs is genuine and very profound. Although the number of scholars, writers, and experts on international affairs in the United States is much larger than that in any other country, that large army lacks an understanding of international conditions that is both profound and genuine. What these people lack primarily is access to direct human contact with these diverse and complex conditions. America's experience differs from that of Britain and France whose experts did have direct contact with the conditions of former British and French colonies. The British and French ruled many countries in Asia and Africa for several centuries. They lived in these countries, and the experience they gained in these countries' affairs and conditions was cumulative. They learned many facts and acquired much information about these countries. America, however, emerged on the international scene in the 20th century as an imperialist power that lacked the experience of colonialist countries. In its attempts to learn about the world, this imperialist state, which reached a very high level of power and political influence in a very short period of time, has relied more on academic research, on computers, and on satellites than it has on the human factor and on human experience, experience which is acquired and developed over several centuries.

America made many mistakes in the past in its dealings with many international situations. Some of these mistakes range from foolish to disastrous. America failed to achieve a sound understanding of many world events and conditions, relying instead on the experience of its western allies, particularly Britain. That happened when the world was divided into two camps, and America's interests and responsibilities in that world were relatively limited.

But now that the whole world has unexpectedly become an open book before it, America feels obliged to concern itself with everything in the world, so that it can retain its role as the sole superpower. Faced with this world's

tremendously complex political, social, economic, religious, and cultural realities, the United States finds itself at a loss to comprehend it—a world whose culture, religion, and politics are several thousand years old. By comparison, America's experience is that of a state which is some 200 years old. It has had an international role as a primary superpower for 45 years, and it has held its position as the world's only superpower for 2 or 3 years.

America's political and intellectual shortcomings are no less dangerous than its economic deficit. America is facing foreign political problems that are beyond its analytical capabilities and beyond its understanding and comprehension. Consequently, it is ill equipped to deal with these problems in a manner that would enable it to achieve goals that are stable and secure.

One of the consequences of that situation is a loss of coherence in American foreign policy. The duplicity which characterizes current American policy is not only the product of the American administration's hypocritical approach, but it is also a product of the fact that the administration has no clear insights into the international situation and has no clear understanding of that situation. What we are finding now in more than one case are blatant inconsistencies in American foreign policy positions. In one country or region America will be hostile to one power of a certain nature. At the same time it will find itself in another country and another region allied with another power whose nature is similar to that power in another part of the world with whom it has a hostile relationship. As we said, the fact that the moral basis of American policy is corrupt is not the reason for this situation. The loss of coherence in American foreign policy is the reason for it.

2. In its efforts to resist communism in the Soviet Union and in eastern Europe, American foreign policy relied largely on promises. Offering the American model as the ideal model of life, America used to promise assistance and a better political and economic life to the nations of eastern Europe and the nations of other countries ruled by communist regimes or by regimes loyal to the Soviet Union. America promised these nations aid if they would give up the communist system, choose capitalism, and accept America's leadership role. America offered itself as a savior, a helper, and a model for these countries.

There is no doubt that America's success in this regard has been decisive: The communist system in eastern Europe and in the Soviet Union itself collapsed, and many regimes that were loyal to the Soviet Union or associated with it in some way fell or were changed. The new governments in these countries soon accepted what America had been calling for. They chose capitalism for their economies and liberalism for their politics, and they accepted America's leadership role as well as the American model.

Yet, an observer of conditions in the countries to which we referred will sense a growing disappointment with America's promises and with the American model, despite the fact that only a short time has elapsed since this basic realignment of loyalties took place on the international scene. The governments of these countries, which chose loyalty to America, are now frantically engaged in seeking U.S. aid; however, they are either getting no aid at all, or getting amounts that are too small to solve any problems. Thus, the veil is parting and the characteristics of the American model are becoming clearer every day. Now that the former communist model has been shattered, people in those countries are discovering every day that the American system is not the shining, ideal system which was portrayed to them by American propaganda. What happened in Los Angeles had a major impact on the growing disappointment which these people feel about the so-called American model. And that disappointment is being strengthened by what is happening now in the American elections campaign with its revelations about economic and social crises and problems. What is highly ironic in this regard is that it is not the [international] anti-American intellectuals, writers, and news agencies who are revealing and exposing the negative aspects of the American model; rather, it is America's own news media, the same octopus-like media which, with tentacles everywhere in the world, were used effectively by the United States to achieve its imperialist goals. However now, wittingly or unwittingly, the American media are employed on a broad scale to expose the truth about the so-called American model. They are used to expose the crises and flaws within American society as well as the inconsistencies of American foreign policy. The important conclusion here is this: If the disappointment and frustration with America's role as a savior, helper, and model is this great only two to three years after assuming this role, with its power and position of world dominance, how great will these feelings of disappointment and frustration be in the years to come? History has never known an empire whose elements of weakness and corruption have been exposed so soon after the height of its power was achieved.

3. When we talked about the characteristics of the present international scene, we mentioned that the control which the United States exercises over the UN Security Council and the United Nations Organization is one of the most dangerous aspects of that scene. It was through this control that the United States was able to get these two institutions, particularly the Security Council, to carry out its wishes. That is how the United States gained the superficial international legitimacy which it used to blackmail the world.

Yet, this achievement of American foreign policy, this legitimacy which the United States is trying to retain by whatever means—terrorism, pressure tactics, blackmail—is not guaranteed to last over the long term. To guarantee its continuation, the United States would have to take into account the interests of the other four states

which have the right to use their veto in the Security Council. By paying huge bribes, America was assured that the former Soviet Union, now Russia, would be party to the decisions that were made against Iraq. To guarantee that the Soviet Union would vote favorably on Resolution 678, America instructed Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states to pay Gorbachev's government \$7 billion. Three days before the vote on the aforementioned resolution the sum of \$4 billion was paid. I pointed that out earlier when I talked about that stage in the program, "al-Malaf" [The File]. Now Russia is going along with America's position against Iraq and Libya in the Security Council in return for economic assistance, which was recently made available to Russia by America and the other six industrial countries.

To guarantee China's acquiescence with the resolutions against Iraq and Libya, America toned down its propaganda campaign against China and agreed to reinstate some favorable trade terms. To ensure British and French cooperation in the Security Council, America has had to—and it still has to—appeal to British as well as French interests.

These facts make it clear that the distinction which America acquired by controlling the Security Council is very costly. Never in the history of the world did an influential superpower have to pay so many bribes directly or indirectly to guarantee the passage of a political resolution it wants.

In addition to its exorbitant financial and economic costs, this ploy with the Security Council and the United Nations is very complicated. Realizing private political goals by having these two bodies pass resolutions requires many deliberations, maneuvers, and complicated formulas.

Given the factors which were referred to previously, the question [that comes to mind] is this: how long can the United States continue to control the Security Council and the United Nations? These factors to which we referred are the American economic crisis, the impotence of American foreign policy, and a growing disillusionment with the American model and with American aid in the countries that in recent years chose loyalty to America. Other factors which should be taken into account in answering that question have to do with the shrinking supply of surplus oil funds in Saudi Arabia and the sheikdoms of the Gulf and America's need for those funds to deal with some aspects of the domestic deficit in its budget. In this regard, America could either continue to use the Security Council and the United Nations and pay the exorbitant economic and political costs of doing that, or it can unilaterally pass its own political resolutions as it did in the past in the aggression against Vietnam, Grenada, Panama, and Libya. If the United States did that, it would lose the veil of international legitimacy which it acquired in the past two years.

Now that we have reviewed the present international situation as well as America's strengths and weaknesses,

what will be our outlook on the world in the coming years, and where will the Arab nation be in that world?

The time we have on this occasion does not allow for a lengthy and detailed investigation into our outlook on the world during the coming stage, but I will try to state briefly what I think about the most salient possibilities. There might be another opportunity to talk about these possibilities in greater depth and more detail.

The world has lived for a long time by the principle of balance. This is especially true of our world, the post-World War II world. Now, however, that principle is nowhere to be found. The world is dominated now by one power which is afflicted with ailments and very serious problems. That power is also politically impotent, and that means, just as we concluded, that it will not be able to impose order in the true sense of the word on the world. The anticipated outcome of this fact—and the characteristics of that outcome are now becoming evident on a broad scale—is widespread instability, local crises, and conflicts throughout the entire world. In a world that is as unsettled as this one, where instability is expected to continue well into the future, world-wide economic growth is not to be expected, not even in the advanced capitalist countries themselves. But in Russia, in the countries of eastern Europe, and in the countries of Asia, Africa, and Latin America, the economic crises will become worse in coming years, and that will generate social and political unrest and destabilize security.

The rise of centers of power in the next few years which can restore the balance that existed before the fall of the Soviet Union and its camp is not expected in my judgment. Yet, the major powers in the West and in the East will continue, in general, to compete for a place in the new universal mosaic which will emerge as America's role fades gradually from the world stage.

These are expectations which I am presenting briefly. It seems at first that the current international situation and expectations regarding it are cause for pessimism. Let me sound a warning here against using the term, pessimism, or the term, optimism. If spreading a sense of optimism would be unrealistic, then wallowing in pessimism would not be objective. We have to deal with this situation and with its possibilities realistically, without giving in. And it is here that we bring up the subject of the Arab nation and where it stands.

The Arab nation is the nation which suffered the most from the evils of the new international situation. That situation started with the aggression against Iraq and the strike against its military power. Iraq's program for industrial and scientific progress was shut down. A malicious, programmed operation is underway to liquidate the Palestinian cause in the context of this new international situation. And Libya is being besieged and threatened also in the context of this new international situation.

Prompted by international Zionism and the schemes it devised for that purpose, America chose to use the Arab

homeland as its primary stage for acting out its imperialist role. Oil was a factor in America's choice to play that ultimate imperialist role on the present international scene. America's western allies, particularly Britain and France, have now joined it on that stage.

We should not fall into the trap of reaching defeatist conclusions and accepting American imperialist propaganda, not only because of the principles we believe in and support enthusiastically, but also because doing that would be an objective mistake. It would be a mistake to accept American imperialist propaganda, particularly that which is being spread by the Egyptian regime, to promote the notion of an American age and the inevitability of yielding to it. This propaganda is spreading the notion that the goals of independence, unity, development, and progress have become unattainable. If the alleged American age had what is required for stability and survival at today's levels, we would conclude that a long period of darkness had descended over the Arab homeland. And yet, our objective review of the facts indicates that this alleged age does not have what is required for stability and survival. These facts show that the weaknesses of this age and the factors of its disintegration are many. When Arab forces that believe in the goals of independence, unity, development, and progress maintain their present positions, even if these positions are weak and their circumstances difficult, any rollback in American power, which has peaked and is not expected to rise further, signifies relative progress for these Arab forces. This is an objective calculation. America's imperialistic arrogance has reached its peak and, though it may remain on top for some time still, it is nevertheless an objective possibility that resilient forces who believe in the national goals we have mentioned will survive. What is required then is steadfastness. An imperialist and Zionist power obsessed with its hostility toward the Arab nation is not the most dangerous thing facing the Arab nation today. The ultimate form of that power was deployed, and [only limited] results were achieved. The real danger to the Arab nation lies in accepting defeat. If the Arab nation accepts defeat, it would be offering imperialism and Zionism additional gains which they did not achieve in the general offensive they conducted and are conducting now.

This is the general approach which the Arab nation and the forces which believe in national goals must insist upon quite forcefully. They must insist upon it now and during the coming period. Examining the particulars of the choices that are available under present circumstances and those that will be available in the future is a task for separate study. Thank you.

Sa'dun Hammadi on Oil, Arab Politics

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[Article by Dr Sa'dun Hammadi: "The Arabs in the Current International Situation: from the Proceedings of

the Second Intellectual Symposium for the Culture and Media Bureau in the National Command of the Socialist Arab Ba'th Party"]

[Text]

Part One: Oil and the Current International Situation

To introduce the subject let us make the following brief, explanatory remarks:

The purpose of this paper is to shed light on the status of oil in the Arab countries and on the relationship between that resource and the policy which is being pursued toward the Arab countries during this stage by the superpowers, particularly the United States. This stage is one which is marked by the end of the cold war and by the appearance of early signs that Western colonialist countries, primarily the United States, are emerging as the only ones in control of the international situation. The aim of putting the spotlight on this matter is to analyze it and, eventually, reach whatever conclusions we can reach about the political and economic relations between the two sides. Needless to say, the relationship between politics and oil is an obvious one that is recognized in light of the known facts and information.

The best introduction to the subject is one that uses figures to draw a picture. We can use these figures to delve into the heart of the matter, and we can analyze the situation and formulate conclusions. In 1990 the oil reserve throughout the Arab homeland in general amounted to 631.85 billion barrels. Among the 13 Arab oil producing countries, four have oil reserves that amount to 555.1 billion barrels. This means these four countries have approximately 85 to 87 percent of the Arab world's oil reserve. These countries are as follows:

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia	260 billion barrels
Iraq	100 billion barrels
The United Arab Emirates	98.1 billion barrels
Kuwait	97 billion barrels
Total	555.1 billion barrels

Arab crude oil reserves make up more than 70 percent of the world's reserves. Confirmed crude oil reserves in the United States are approximately 35 billion barrels only.

In 1990 oil production from 13 Arab countries exceeded 16.6 million barrels per day. Of that amount 12 million barrels a day were produced by the same [aforementioned] four Arab countries.

With regard to consumption, the industrial countries are the largest consumers of energy, and they are the ones that rely the most on oil. Western Europe and Japan are almost totally dependent on imported oil. In those countries the ratio of imported oil to the total amount of oil that is consumed is as follows:

Belgium	100 percent
Denmark	100 percent
France	99 percent
Germany	95 percent
Italy	100 percent
Japan	100 percent

The United States is both an oil-producing and an oil-consuming country. It is noticeable, however, that the decline in production has been steady. U.S. oil production fell from 8.5 million barrels in 1980 to 7.4 million barrels in 1991. Consumption, however, amounted to 17.1 million barrels of oil a day in 1980. Because of energy conservation measures consumption declined in 1984 to 15.74 million barrels. Energy consumption rose again after that, and by 1991 it amounted to 16.7 million barrels a day.¹ By the year 2000, oil consumption is expected to amount to 18.02 million barrels a day. To round out the picture, it would be important to shed light on the situation of the former Soviet Union, which was a superpower in the area of crude oil production and exports.

In 1981 oil production in the Soviet Union amounted to 12.18 million barrels a day. Production rose slightly in the few years which followed, but then it declined. By 1990 production had dropped to 11.7 million barrels a day. In 1981 Soviet oil exports amounted to 3.22 million barrels, and by 1991 it is estimated that Soviet oil exports will amount to 2.2 million barrels a day. Under the present situation the Russian Federation is controlling the larger part of crude oil production. It is producing 91.5 percent of total production in the Soviet Union, and that entire amount is exported from ports that are controlled by the Russian Federation. It is to be expected that oil production in the former Soviet Union and oil exports from it will depend on the stability of the new situation and on Russia's financial and technical abilities to continue with this activity. Oil exports in the Soviet Union then, which is the largest oil producer in the world, are falling. In 1991 oil exports did not exceed 2.2 million barrels, and prospects for the future do not appear to be bright.

The Soviet Union's oil exports have been shrinking for many years because Soviet consumption has been growing and Soviet oil fields are being depleted. That country was compelled, therefore, to follow a policy of conserving oil on the domestic scene, and it started withdrawing from the world oil market. In the United States, however, the largest oil consumer in the world, production has been falling, and reliance on imports, especially from the Arab region, has been rising.

The Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington states that "It would be useful and prudent to recall the 1973 oil embargo which was carried out by countries in the Middle East. At that time no more than eight percent of U.S. oil needs were met by these countries. Today, however, the United States relies on

oil that comes from these countries: up to 30 percent of the oil in the United States comes from these countries. The fact that more than 70 percent of the free world's oil reserves can be found in the countries of the Middle East accounts to a large extent for U. S. dependence on these countries. Estimates indicate that U.S. reliance on imported Arab oil will grow in the coming years and that the United States will be importing up to 50 percent of its oil from the Arab states."

In an important analytical article published by THE WASHINGTON POST in 1990, Thomas Lehman, an oil and political analyst, said: "The figures make it clear that in the next few years the United States will become a net importer of more than half of the oil it consumes. The political implications of that unsettling situation will find their way into 'The National Energy Strategy Report' which the Department of Energy [DOE] will submit to the White House next spring."

It is to be noted also that as time passes, the importance of the oil which non-Arab countries produce and export is declining. This means that the Arab countries, particularly the aforementioned four countries, are poised to be in a position of power and prominence regarding oil production and oil exports. They are poised to be in a position to influence international trade in this important substance. It is known that oil production in Indonesia, Venezuela, and Nigeria has been falling and that the quantities of oil exported from these countries have little effect on total world exports. Because these countries' resources have been or are being depleted, they rely on prices more than on the volume of exports to increase their financial revenues from exporting crude oil.

With regard to Iran, there are indications that it is almost in the same situation. The Shah of Iran was known to have applied pressure to the oil producing companies, urging them to increase their annual rate of production, but history shows that the Shah had turned away from that policy in the last years. He was emphasizing higher prices and oil exploration activities outside Iran. He was emphasizing the expansion of those activities at the expense of the Arab countries in the area of the Arabian Gulf. The most important matter indicated by the figures, as far as oil is concerned, is that the coming years, which will bring this decade to a close, will bring about a critical situation in the Western industrial countries, primarily the United States, where demand for oil has been growing because of economic expansion. At the same time the number of oil producers and exporters is becoming smaller and is being narrowed down to a number of Arab countries, namely, the aforementioned four.

The importance of the Arab homeland in general and that of the aforementioned four Arab countries in particular will grow as far as meeting the oil needs of Western industrial countries, particularly the United States. There is unanimous agreement about this among sources of information interested in energy affairs, such as the U.S. Energy Information Administration, the

Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, the American Petroleum Institute, The Energy Research Center in Cambridge, Britain, and the East-West Center. The information which these institutions have indicates that total oil production, excluding the former socialist countries, amounts to approximately 54 million barrels of oil a day. The OPEC countries produce 22.3 million barrels a day of this amount.

At this time, the worldwide demand for oil is on an increase—from 62 million barrels a day in 1987 to [an anticipated] 70.6 million barrels a day by 1995, and, further, to 74.5 million barrels a day by the year 2000. Thomas Lehman's aforementioned report, which was published in THE WASHINGTON POST, states: "The gap between what the oil countries produce and the maximum amount they can produce is expected to amount to 10 million barrels of oil a day. If the United States, the Soviet Union, Mexico, and Iran are producing all the oil they can produce, then almost all surplus energy will be held by the Arab countries in the Gulf." The Arab countries that are referred to here are the aforementioned four Arab countries: Saudi Arabia, Iraq, the Emirates, and Kuwait.

This information was repeated in the Western media, particularly in the United States, and it was echoed in an important energy conference that was held in Canada in 1990. The United States sent two oil industry emissaries to visit the Arab countries in the Gulf region.

Part Two

As a consequence of the 1973 war with the Zionist entity, the Arab countries resolved on 17 October 1973 to reduce oil production. Then, on 4 November of the same year, they decided to ban oil exports to the United States and to the Netherlands. Iraq proposed that oil installations be nationalized, but its proposal was not approved at that meeting.

The impact of that measure was economically and politically significant. It was the first time oil was used as a weapon against the Zionist entity and the countries which support it. Although the ban was not long-lived (it was lifted on 18 March 1974) its significance lingered in the minds of Western politicians. That decision, albeit low-key and timid, was the first such decision to be made by Third World countries as an expression of their rejection. Colonialist countries are known to operate in a cold and calculating manner. Their calculations are known to be rational, abstract, and based on their self interest, not on principles, international law, and accepted business practices between countries. The United States manifested this in a particular way which exemplified the old spirit of colonialism which is based on power. The U.S. Congress had charged a high-level committee with the task of looking into the subject of using military force to occupy the sources of oil in the Gulf region and to produce and market the oil directly under the protection of U.S. troops. The committee submitted its report, known as the "American Plan To

Invalidate Arab Sources of Oil," in the second half of 1975. It became the topic of conversation in the highest levels of America's political circles. On 21 January 1975 President Gerald Ford, who was president at the time, held a press conference during which he gave the following answer to the following question:

Question: "Mr President, you and Secretary Kissinger have said that if oil producers push the West into a corner, you may have to use military force. The American people want to know if this will require a declaration of war from Congress, or will you be able to disregard this constitutional measure as some of your predecessors have done?"

Answer: "I can assure you that in case there is a requirement for U.S. authorities to intervene militarily, we will fulfill completely all constitutional measures required of the president."

Henry Kissinger was secretary of state at that time, and he was known to support military intervention and occupation of the area. Although the United States did not occupy the region then, the fact that U.S. officials were giving serious consideration to this matter indicates that U.S. policy would not hesitate to use armed force to achieve its own interests. The United States would use armed force regardless of international law and in contravention of the UN charter.

As far as their colonialist interests are concerned, Western countries have been following a policy whose parts are interconnected. It is a policy that has undergone no substantive change since the onset of this century—although the methods may have changed, the objectives remain the same. When we know that fact, the relationship between that past, which is not distant, and the present becomes clear. Because of the so-called Kuwait crisis, military force was actually used against Iraq under the pretext of international legitimacy. It has become clear that the central issue of that aggression was first and foremost oil.

Part Three

It is imperative here that we shed light on some of the specifics of this subject so that we can analyze some of its relevant features.

There are two sides to the oil situation as it stands today: Arab reserves, production, and exports on one side and Western reserves, production, and imports on the opposite side. In this regard we are talking about Western imports in general and U. S. imports in particular. This situation, with its two opposite sides, is one of special significance, and it may be explained as follows:

The importance of Algeria, Libya, and Qatar, as far as oil is concerned, has been diminishing continuously. In 1990 Algeria's oil reserves amounted to 9.2 billion barrels; its daily oil production amounted to 794,000 barrels, and its daily exports amounted to 281,000 barrels. In Libya, where oil reserves amounted to 45

billion barrels, daily production amounted to 1.3 million barrels, and daily exports amounted to 1 million barrels. In Qatar reserves amounted to 4.5 billion barrels, daily production amounted to 397,000 barrels, and daily exports amounted to 348,000 barrels. These are low figures, and the information which is available over a somewhat lengthy period of time in the past indicates that this situation is not temporary. It is, rather, a trend that will continue because of the volume of reserves and the capacity of the fields.

Since the energy which is available in non-Arab countries for production and export is also limited and since, as stated previously, these countries' capacity to produce and export energy is approaching its maximum limit, the only countries where production may be increased are the four Arab countries. These countries, in the order of importance, are Saudi Arabia, Iraq, the Emirates, and Kuwait. They are all located on the shores of the Arabian Gulf, and three of them are governed by regimes that are subject to Western influence. But Iraq is a progressive country governed by a revolution whose most important qualities are nationalism, progressiveness, and independence in foreign policy. That unequivocal diagnosis was made by oil publications and analysts. In his important WASHINGTON POST article, which was printed in that newspaper early in 1990, Thomas Lehman made the following unequivocal statement:

"The experts' analysis of current oil figures indicates that rising demand for oil in Asia and the West and shrinking oil reserves in most of the oil producing countries will place four Arab countries in the driver's seat with regard to controlling oil prices and oil production. These Arab countries are the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Kuwait, and the United Arab Emirates."

INTERNATIONAL ENERGY magazine was citing the Energy Information Bureau when it published the following: "Mexico may be able to expand its production capacity, and it may find it easy to increase current production levels, provided the price of crude oil is high enough to act as its incentive for [higher] production." Other oil experts, however, are almost in agreement about the fact that growing demand for oil will enable the Arab countries of the Gulf to control market forces.

The aforementioned report, which was submitted to Congress, was a report about an American plan to invade the sources of Arab oil. It mentioned the following conditions for the success of that invasion plan:

"Success depends to a large extent on two essential conditions, namely, slight damage to the oil installations and no military intervention by the Soviet Union." (The Arabic edition, p 4) What is meant here, of course, by "slight damage" is this: The United States can occupy the oil installations before the oil producing countries have a chance to cause damage that would be significant to stop production.

The condition of Soviet nonintervention was satisfied in the recent attack against Iraq, and the concern with

avoiding a decrease in production, which could create an oil crisis worldwide, was allayed by Saudi Arabia and the Emirates. Saudi Arabia increased production significantly to make up for the oil that was lost from Iraq and Kuwait, and the Emirates did the same thing. This assistance with oil which Saudi Arabia and the Emirates contributed to the U.S. aggression was crucial. Without it, a worldwide oil crisis would have undoubtedly occurred.

Part Four

This is the situation as it pertains to oil under current international circumstances.

Japan and the industrial countries in Europe have no oil resources. They rely almost entirely on imported oil. Oil reserves in the United States do not exceed 35 billion barrels. That is approximately 5.5 percent of what the Arab countries have in oil reserves: a total of 632 billion barrels. Because oil production in the United States continues to decline even as U.S. oil consumption continues to rise, U.S. reliance on imported oil is expected to increase by the end of this decade to approximately 50 percent of demand. Oil from the aforementioned four Arab countries, among whom Iraq holds second place, is the only way this demand can be met. What then was the real motive for the aggression? Was it the protection of international law and international legitimacy, or was it oil? Is it reasonable to accept the notion that upholding international law was the motive for the aggression, given the fact that the U.S. Congress, which is the legislative authority in the United States, commissioned a high-level committee in 1975 to submit a report on how Arab sources of oil may be occupied? Is it reasonable to accept this notion given the statement that was made by the American president regarding this matter being outside international law and the U.N. charter? Is it reasonable to accept this notion given the picture that emerges from the figures we have provided? The answer must undoubtedly be negative.

But what does the Arab oil situation now mean for the Arab nation? It undoubtedly means that the Arabs hold tremendous power in their hands. This power, if the Arabs are able to use it, could significantly influence the policies of Western countries, particularly the United States. The Arabs can use their power and side with Iraq instead of with the United States. This power is real, material power, and the other three Arab regimes are not using it. It has been established that using this power to achieve valid economic and political Arab interests is legitimate. That is why failure to use this power does not a matter of legitimacy, but of political will.²

The blatant inconsistency between having the material power which these countries have, particularly Saudi Arabia, and not using it and yielding to the wishes of Western countries, particularly the United States, has caused the gravest political and economic damage to Arab interests, particularly in the area of the Arab-Zionist conflict. This inconsistency has attracted the

world's attention and is practically common knowledge. The Arabs' friends called attention to it on many occasions. When an Iraqi delegation headed by President Saddam Husayn visited Moscow in 1972, Saddam Husayn was then vice president of the Revolutionary Command Council. During that visit the delegation met with Soviet Prime Minister Kosygin who told them that Monday morning on 11 February 1972: "If the Arabs were to unite, they could become a power that would shake up Europe because it is the Arabs who have the energy on which Europe and other countries run. Israel is nothing but a dwarf, even with U.S. assistance. Colonialism is doing everything it can to prevent the unification of Arab countries." It is clear that when the Soviet premier spoke about energy, he was talking about oil.

The secret behind these countries' weak or nonexistent political will to use the power that is available to them to serve the legitimate interests of the Arab nation lies in the weakness or absence of their political will to confront the colonialist countries, particularly the United States. This is not a new political phenomenon for Arab regimes which, in general, have been somewhat prone at one time or another to being submissive to colonialist policy and to the United States in particular. They are prone to being submissive because they miscalculate interests, and they miscalculate the other side's power as well as their own to confront others. They are prone to being submissive because of a poor self-image. Consequently, they not only submit to the colonialist countries, but they also cooperate actively with them.

When war broke out with the Zionist entity in 1973 and public sentiment was aroused, the Arab ministers of oil decided on 4 November 1973 to reduce production and ban oil exports to the United States and the Netherlands. The Palestinian question was at the heart of that measure. What we found, however, was that the spirit of weakness and hesitation came back to the governments of Saudi Arabia and the other Gulf states. They applied pressure to end the embargo, and the embargo was lifted on 18 March 1974 under the influence of illusions, erroneous analyses, and a defeatist attitude which the Gulf states spread at the meetings of Arab oil ministers. They created the impression at those meetings that a new American policy toward the Zionist entity was in the offing and that this new policy would be supportive of Arab rights. That, however, turned out to be false.

Thus, this power was abandoned soon after it was put to use. The weapon was set aside and has not been utilized since then. Let us listen to what Robert Hanks, an American, had to say at a symposium on oil and security in the Gulf. That symposium was held by the Center for Arab Studies in London in October 1980. Mr Hanks said: "Some people thought that if the American people could be shocked into realizing the extent to which they rely on Middle East oil and if they realized the effect that an oil embargo would have on them, they would reject the usual Zionist arguments which have been dominating U.S. policy in the region. However, five months after announcing its embargo, OAPEC lifted its ban on

oil exports, that is, before Americans had become sufficiently aware of the damage which was done to them by the embargo in such a short period. Had they come to realize that, such a realization could have led to a radical change in their points of view regarding this area. Had the embargo lasted for one year or more, many Americans would have realized that the interests of their country have to take precedence over the interests of Israel, and it would have been possible to come closer to a lasting solution to the Middle East problem.³

Ever since then—the 1973 oil embargo—that important weapon has been idle and, because of the influence of the Arab oil countries in the Gulf, primarily Saudi Arabia, it has not been picked up and used. Although the embargo lasted only for a short period of time, it was not ineffective. The embargo had a direct and concrete effect on the United States, on Europe, and on Japan. In fact, its international impact was tremendous. And yet, this weapon has been dropped, and no reasonable, acceptable justification for dropping it has been heard. Instead, there is silence, and that silence accompanies a policy that acquiesces completely to Western countries' wishes. Western countries want as much of this important substance as they need, and they want it at prices that are to a large extent amenable to their economies.

That is how Saudi Arabia and the oil countries in the Gulf have gone along with Western policy on oil and have become tools serving the interests of Western countries rather than Arab interests.

Now, the Soviet Union is out of the picture, and competition and balance are no longer factors in the international situation. Now, U.S. need for imported Arab oil has risen. Now, the four Arab countries have become the principal source for filling the 10 million barrel gap between world demand for oil and production. Now, in the wake of all these developments, Arab oil has become more important and, accordingly, its effectiveness as a weapon has also grown. And yet, it has not been used as a weapon since that brief experiment in 1973.

Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and the Emirates have occasionally tried to explain why oil is not being used as a political weapon to serve Arab interests. They have said that oil is an economic and a financial issue and that we have to deal with it on that basis. They have said that oil should not be thrust into the political conflict. Is that right?

The relationship between politics and the economy is well known and recognized. All countries use that relationship when they can and when the need arises. The United Nations utilizes that relationship in accordance with Chapter Seven of the Charter.

In 1940, for example, the United States imposed export control measures for political considerations. These measures remained in effect after World War II, and that led to a ban on exporting a large number of goods to the countries of the eastern bloc.

The Export Control Act was passed in 1949. It clearly stipulated that it was the policy of the United States to use export control measures "to further the foreign policy of the United States."⁴

The Export Control Act authorized the president of the United States to prohibit the export of any commodity or substance from the United States or from any one of its territories unless certain rules and regulations issued by the president in that regard were followed. These rules and regulations could stipulate that any application for a permit to export American goods to any country or group of countries may be turned down if that country or group of countries pose a threat to the national security of the United States. An application for an export permit could be rejected if the president determined that these exports could make a significant contribution to the military or economic capability of that country or group of countries which might pose a threat to national security or to U.S. prosperity.

That is how a detailed system for making distinctions between exports to different countries came to be set up. Foreign countries were divided into eight groups, and each group was to have its own special treatment. On 3 December 1950, the United States imposed a total ban on U.S. exports to Cuba. In 1969 the Export Management Act replaced the previous export act, and that act authorized the president of the United States to prohibit the export of materials and goods in accordance with rules which he could issue in that regard for the purpose "of protecting national security, advancing U.S. foreign policy, and enabling the United States to realize its international responsibilities." Many of the regulations which were issued in accordance with the 1949 act, including the classification of importing countries into groups and treating them differently, remain in effect at the present time.

In 1951, the Mutual Defense Assistance Act, known as the Battle Act, was passed. The act made it clear that, "It is the policy of the United States to prohibit the export of a large number of strategic goods, including oil, to countries which pose a threat to U.S. security. These countries include the Soviet Union and the countries that are under its influence."

The principle of adjusting a country's export policy to make it serve its foreign policy is well-known. It is a principle which has been approved and broadly applied to ordinary exports. Applying that principle to strategic exports like oil would be more fitting. However, the question which remains unanswered is this: Did Saudi Arabia and the other Gulf countries really refrain from using oil in the political arena? Did they really apply a policy of not using oil policy to serve political objectives?

What happened before the so-called Kuwait crisis must be recalled here. These countries increased production deliberately, raising it to levels that went beyond what the market could tolerate. In doing so they caused oil prices to fall, and that drop in prices had far-reaching

consequences on Iraq's hard currency revenues during the period which followed the end of the war with Iran. Now that this important fact has been made clear, recalling some information about the subject is imperative. In January 1989, OPEC's production ceiling was 18.5 million barrels a day. Kuwait's production quota then was 1.03 million barrels, even though its actual production was 1.25 million barrels. Pressed by Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and the Emirates, OPEC raised the production ceiling in July 1989 to 19.5 million barrels a day. Kuwait's production quota then was 1.09 million barrels, even though its actual production was 1.84 million barrels. In October, OPEC came under pressure from the same countries, and it was compelled to raise its production ceiling once again to 20.5 million barrels. While Kuwait's production quota was 1.14 million barrels, its actual production amounted to 1.902 million barrels. Once again, because of pressure from these countries, in January 1990, OPEC raised the ceiling to 22.086 million barrels, and Kuwait's production quota became 1.25 million barrels a day, but its actual production was 1.932 million barrels. Kuwait continued to increase production, and by July 1990 and in the months that followed [sic], it was producing 2.2 million barrels. Because of all that, the price of oil fell to \$7 during the second half of 1990, in spite of the fact that OPEC's official price was \$18. The Emirates participated in the process of flooding the market. In 1988 that country's quota amounted to 988,000 barrels, but it refused to abide by its quota and proceeded to produce the amount it wanted to produce. Then it started demanding a quota that was the same as Kuwait's (1.5 million barrels). Afterwards, by mid 1990, the Emirates was producing 2.1 million barrels of oil a day.

But Saudi Arabia used the technique of deception. It would talk about increasing production, but it would not increase its own until Kuwait and the Emirates had increased theirs. It would then increase its own production under the pretext of not allowing others to seize its markets, and it would say that the quota system was no longer useful. Any reduction in the price of oil [is costly to Iraq], and when we realize that a \$1 drop in the price of oil means a financial loss to Iraq of approximately \$1 billion, the magnitude of the financial loss which befell Iraq becomes evident.

There was no economic justification for the policy practiced by these countries of flooding the market. At that time we made it clear to the ruler of Kuwait that if Kuwait were to produce 1.5 million barrels and then sell that oil at the OPEC price of \$18, its annual revenue would amount to \$9.855 billion. We made it clear that Kuwait could earn the same amount if it produced 2 million barrels and sold the oil at \$13.50 a barrel. If returns from oil were Kuwait's goal, Kuwait could get the returns it wanted without flooding the market. Kuwait could do that by selling its oil at the OPEC price.

The \$18 price that was set by OPEC was not high at all. In fact, that price was less than that which the producing

countries should have received if they wanted to maintain the purchasing power that one barrel of oil had early in 1980. To do that, the price of oil in 1990 should be \$60 per barrel. There is unanimous agreement about that in all the literature of the oil industry. To correct the situation, Iraq suggested that the four countries hold a summit conference to stabilize the price of oil and the quantities of production. Iraq's proposal, however, was circumvented when the king of Saudi Arabia proposed that the oil ministers hold a meeting instead. That meeting, which was held in Jeddah from 10 to 11 July 1990, approved the OPEC price and [a declaration] that quotas would be adhered to. However, Kuwait's minister of oil made a statement on 16 July, immediately after the conference, in which he announced that the agreement was valid for two months.

The policy which these countries pursued—a policy of flooding the market and reducing prices—has become well-known in OPEC's oil industry circles. Renee Otez, OPEC's former president, told REUTERS news agency on 12 September 1990: "The rulers of Kuwait are the ones who are primarily responsible for the drop in world oil prices earlier this year, and that had an effect on the Iraqi economy."

He added, "Kuwait, the Emirates, and Saudi Arabia flooded world markets. They dumped approximately 2.5 million barrels of oil a day above and beyond OPEC's maximum production." And he added, "These parties refused repeatedly to adhere to production quotas."

It is now common knowledge that it was this approach to oil that was behind the Gulf crisis whose aim from the outset was to deal a blow to Iraq's strength. The strike against Iraq would be carried out by the West, primarily the United States.

When war broke out and Iraq and Kuwait dropped out of the market, Saudi Arabia and the Emirates increased production. The quota system was suspended, and Saudi Arabia made up for the shortage in the world market's oil supply, thereby offering U.S. aggression and U.S. policy in the crisis significant oil support.

It follows, then, that oil was actually used in politics to pave the way for the crisis. Oil was used in politics when these countries increased production and exceeded the quotas that were set for them by OPEC. The drop in prices was caused by them, and it was done to undermine the Iraqi economy. After the crisis, Saudi Arabia and the Emirates increased production to make up for the loss of Iraqi and Kuwaiti oil, and that was done to serve U.S. policy.

Thus, oil was not treated as an economic issue that had nothing to do with politics. On the contrary, oil was used as a political weapon. But instead of using it to serve Arab interests, oil was used to serve Western interests, particularly the interests of the United States of America.

Instead of pursuing a policy that serves the interests of the Arab nation, the Arab countries of the Gulf, namely, Saudi Arabia, the Emirates, and Kuwait, are pursuing a policy that serves the interests of Western policy, and they are using oil to do that. They are using oil to serve Western interests at a time when Arab oil is becoming more important to those countries which stand on the other side of the struggle with the Arab nation. The Arab countries of the Gulf are pursuing this policy at a time when oil is becoming a more important and a more effective weapon to be used in serving legitimate national interests, particularly those in the Arab-Zionist conflict. These Arab countries are using oil as a weapon to serve Western interests at a time when the Zionist entity is becoming more intransigent and more determined to occupy all Palestinian soil as well as other Arab territory in Syria and Lebanon. These Arab countries are doing that at a time when the Zionist entity's expansionist ambitions are growing, its attacks on Arab countries are becoming broader, and its terrorist practices against the Palestinian people are becoming more far-reaching. All that makes the enormity of what happened quite clear.

Today, the economic potential of the Arab homeland is tremendous, and the political influence of that potential is unmistakable. The Arab homeland is fully entitled to use this potential to serve its legitimate interests, particularly to safeguard its national security and to defend its economic and political future. What is preventing that from happening, however, is an environment inimical to cooperation. The ruling regimes in those countries are pursuing a policy of aligning themselves with the other party in the struggle.

If the Arab countries managed in 1973 to have an impact on the status of the Arabs by banning oil exports to the United States for a short period of time, there is no doubt that today they can become a decisive factor if they make up their minds and decide to use that weapon as it should be used.

The policy of turning the oil weapon against the Arabs and using it in the relationship with the United States conjures up everything that is associated with the poor distribution of wealth among the rich and the poor in the Arab homeland. It is associated with the injustices, the disappointment, and the disgruntlement which result from the poor distribution of wealth, and these injustices and disappointments will become the real incentives that will foster a spirit of rebellion against that situation. Instead of solving acute problems by means of a peaceful development, these conditions, as time goes by, will cause the masses to conclude that revolution is the only possible way for rectifying the situation. And this is what happened in many places in the Arab homeland.

Conclusion

We can conclude the following from the foregoing:

The current international situation is somewhat out of balance. In the past, the Soviet Union and the countries

of the socialist bloc counterbalanced the power of the West led by the United States. But after the collapse of the eastern bloc, competition with the West, particularly the United States, and a counterbalancing force became practically non-existent. The eastern bloc used to make an effort to limit the colonialist influence of the West in the world, particularly in the Third World. It also served as an outlet for the oil producing countries which they could use to stand up to the world oil monopolies which are owned by Western countries. The assistance which Iraq received from the Soviet Union when Western oil companies imposed a blockade against Iraq was nothing but an example of that. The Soviet Union defied the blockade and helped Iraq put the field of north al-Ramilah to good use.

The collapse of the eastern bloc and the manner in which that collapse took place was not met in the West by restraint and precautions for the distant future. Quite the contrary, the West, anxious to make the most of the situation, reacted quickly and impulsively in an attempt to spread its influence over the world and maintain an exclusive hold over the affairs of Third World countries. The West wanted to do that by using the United Nations, whose actions now are prompted by the United States and are almost automatic. That is how the aggression against Iraq came about, and that is how what is happening now against Libya is happening. That is how the Zionist entity is providing unqualified support for such expansionist aggression.

And yet, it has been noticed that the West, which is now more powerful vis-a-vis the Arabs, has become in another sense weaker than it was in the past because of its need for oil. The Arab countries are now, and will continue to be for the rest of this decade, in a stronger position vis-a-vis the United States as far as oil is concerned. That is why there is a concrete possibility that a historic settlement to one of the most important issues that concern the Arab nation can be reached now. And yet, the Arabs do not have the political will to use this power.

Saudi Arabia, the Emirates, and Kuwait bear the total responsibility for that.

The secret of this matter lies in one's sense of power, not in one's weapons.

Footnotes

1. "Energy and Oil Statistics," OPEC 1991 Deutsche Bank Group, Sept 91; "Annual Energy Outlook," DOE, 92.

2. Those who wish to look up the statutory legitimacy of using this power may refer to Ibrahim Shihatah's book, "*Haqr Tasdir al-Nafi al-Arabi*" [*The Arab Oil Boycott*], the Institute for Palestinian Studies, Beirut, 1975, particularly chapters three and four.

3 "Oil and Security in the Arabian Gulf," the Center for Arab Studies, London, 1980 p 26.

4. The Export Control Act of 1949, Section 2, 19 U.S.C. 2021.

KUWAIT

Iraq 'Lies' About Border Demarcation Issue

92AE0458A London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 4 Jun 92 p 9

[Text] The Kuwaiti Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs, Mr. Dari 'Abdallah al-'Uthman, has deemed the letter from the Iraqi Foreign Minister Mr. Ahmad Hussein al-Samara'i to the UN Secretary-General Dr. Boutros Ghali regarding the demarcation of the Kuwait-Iraqi borders with its claims, falsehoods and open historical distortions, just one more of the Iraqi regime's ongoing attempts and endeavors to hinder the implementation of the Security Council resolutions concerning the problem of Kuwait. Mr. al-'Uthman in statements distributed by the Kuwaiti Embassy in London, said, "The International Committee on the Demarcation of Borders between Kuwait and Iraq is empowered by the Security Council and its decisions are abiding upon all parties that have previously stated that they would approve its decisions in implementation of Security Council Resolution 687, issued on April 14, 1991, and agreed to by Iraq prior to the cessation of military actions to liberate Kuwait." The Kuwaiti Minister referred to the contents of the letter of the Iraqi foreign minister in which he warned against tension in the area, saying, "This tension was an inevitable result of the vile Iraqi aggression against Kuwait with its dangerous results and consequences in all fields and levels." He added that the government of Kuwait will take all actions and measures that guarantee the legitimate Kuwaiti rights according to international legitimacy and within the framework of the United Nations. He added, "The concerned authorities are currently preparing an appropriate response to all the claims, falsehoods, and historical distortions included in that letter."

Foreign Pressure To Democratize Denied

92AE0458B London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 3 Jun 92 p 1

[Sheikh Sa'd: "The Elections Shall Be Held on Time"]

[Text] Kuwait—The office of the Kuwaiti Crown Prince Sheikh Sa'd al-'Abdallah al-Sabah was the scene of another meeting with a group of elite Kuwaiti politicians and intellectuals to resume the dialogue regarding a number of important issues that Sheikh Sa'd wanted to discuss. While the first meeting was the scene of critical remarks by some in attendance, the second meeting which was held last Monday evening was characterized by a calmer dialogue and a tendency on the part of the attending politicians, some of whom are from the opposition, to support government proposals regarding some issues and also to cease the political wrangling which was injurious to Kuwait. Some of the participants told AL-HAYAH that the meeting started with a long speech from Sheikh Sa'd in which he reiterated the commitment

of the Kuwaiti leadership to democracy, saying, "It will undoubtedly take place in October of this year." He asked the attendees not to have any doubt of the truthfulness of their intentions in this matter. At the same time, he denied rumors of external pressure being exerted to force the Kuwaiti government toward the democratic path and added that his country, "Rejects external pressure and interference in Kuwaiti affairs even from sisterly and friendly countries." He also emphasized that democracy represents "Kuwaiti conviction." The Kuwaiti Crown Prince has stressed anew the continuation of the threat against the security of his country, saying, "Iraqi ambitions are still there." He added "The President of the Iraqi regime is still waiting to harm Kuwait and awaiting changes in the international, Arab and Gulf situations." He urged the forces of political opposition to safeguard the country and to lay aside their disagreements through which the enemies of Kuwait might find an opening.

Information Minister on Media Freedom, Security

92AE04274 London SAWT AL KUWAIT AL DUWALI in Arabic 19 Jun p 3

[Interview with Kuwaiti Minister of Information Dr. Badr Jasim al-Ya'qub, place and date not given]

[Text] Kuwait—A decision issued by Information Minister Dr. Badr Jasim al-Ya'qub, defining the principles of Kuwait's information policy, stressed that this policy is based on commitment to Islam as a religion, a creed, and a way of life as well as a policy of strengthening Arab and Gulf affiliation. The decision also provides for adherence to the principle of openness and freedom of expression within the bounds of laws and traditions, respect for human rights, and strengthening communication between the grass roots and the leadership so that information can be an effective means for the achievement of social accord.

The decision says that political objectives of Kuwait's information policy is to emphasize the Kuwaiti citizen's allegiance to his soil and history, to uphold his present achievements, and to proclaim the country's heroes as national heroes. The objective is also to underline security and political stability.

The decision explains the media's role in the fields of education and development and stresses the need to modernize laws and regulations now in effect in the various media fields. The ministerial decision, issued the day before yesterday, stressed the need to maintain credibility, impartiality, and objectivity and to shun all that may generate sedition and hatred. The decision also provides that the Kuwaiti media should promote security awareness on the basis of strengthening the country both in the domestic and international fields, counter campaigns of doubts, and combat biased rumors that aim at destabilizing the security of the citizen and the country. The following is text of the decision:

Article 1:

Far-reaching and vast changes of great potentials are taking place in the international arena. But these changes pose difficult challenges and complex problems, one of which is the increasingly far-reaching international repercussions every event causes, however domestic or of local interest it may be, thanks to the great technological advancement in today's media. A country's information policy must keep abreast with development of events. Within this context, we can define the media policy as a group of principles and objectives which the Kuwaiti media adopts and pursues in the local, regional, Islamic, and international fields. In order to further clarify these points we submit the following:

First: the principles

The information policy is based on a number of principles, the most important of which are:

1—Commitment to Islam as a religion, creed, and way of life for developing the intellect, faculty, and values of both the individual and the community, emphasizing national unity, strengthening ties between the people and their leadership, underlining Kuwait's affiliation with the Arab nation and its care for the Arab peoples' interests, and promoting positive relations with these people. Kuwait's affiliation to the GCC represents a positive kind of Arab unification.

2—Kuwaiti information policy is based on the principle of openness, freedom of expression, and respect for the opposite view within the framework of the law, traditions, values of the state, respect for human rights, and bolstering of democratic concepts.

3—Serving development issues, contributing to building the character of the ingenious and productive Kuwaiti citizen who interacts with his society and the Arab and Islamic nation, shares the responsibility of his country's political decision-making, and participates in his country's development and progress.

4—Pursuing openness toward human civilization and positive interaction with the changes taking place in our contemporary world, within the framework of the peoples' rights to achieve their sovereignty and independence.

5—Bolstering information contacts between the society's grass roots and the leadership so that this will become an effective means of social interaction between the various views and trends in the society, the media being one of the tools of change and education capable of influencing and guiding social thinking.

6—Preserving moral values and enhancing their effect on action and behavior, and promoting new values consistent with the development and progress of the society, such as the values of work, production, cooperation, and social solidarity.

7—Asserting Kuwait's cultural characteristic and enhancing the feeling that Kuwait is part of the Gulf family, all of which requires strengthening confidence.

strengthening links between the GCC countries, and capitalizing on the honorable stands which leaders, governments, and peoples of these countries adopted.

8—Emphasizing and deepening Kuwait's Arab character, asserting that its strength stems from the fact that Kuwait lies in a vital part of the Arab world; that what it has experienced does not change its principled stands with regard to belief in Arabism as its past, present, and destiny; that its direction is always based on the principle of Arab solidarity in everything that it offers and contributes toward strengthening development and cooperation between the Arab countries; and avoids all that may harm Arab solidarity.

9—Reinforcing the spirit of affiliation and amity between the Islamic countries proceeding from sound Islamic principles that strengthen ties and brotherhood on the basis of goodness, justice, and right; asserting that Kuwait is part of the civilized world community in which the spirit of justice, freedom, and equality prevails; and which in its policy relies on the principles of international legality and adherence to international laws, covenants, customs, and values.

Second: the objectives

Proceeding from the aforementioned basic principles, we can define the information policy of the state of Kuwait as follows:

1—To underline the Kuwaiti citizen's attachment to his land and history, to the stands of his forefathers, and to his present achievements. To stress his heroism, especially heroism of the Kuwaiti martyrs, and portray them as national heroes whose example is to be followed. To maintain the State's security and political stability under the rule of law and to reinforce the citizens' confidence that Kuwait is an oasis of safety, security, and peace.

2—To aim at affirming absolute allegiance to the homeland, stressing national unity, exploiting the people's cohesiveness with the political leadership, underlining the concept of one family, affirming the principle of equal opportunity for everybody, maintaining justice, and consecrating right and defending it.

3—To aim at comprehensive development by utilizing the Kuwaiti citizen's potentials and energies, developing his personality, enhancing its efficiency, and sharpening his sense of participation and responsibility, and boosting his self-reliance. On the other hand, Kuwaiti information emphasizes the development and progress of the society by stressing the cohesiveness of its social structure and the efficiency of its institutions in work and production.

4—To affirm the continuous activity of the departments, institutions, and corporations and their interaction with the aim of improving performance. It also seeks to

establish integration between them in the field of developing the Kuwaiti citizen, so that the functions and roles these bodies carry out will not contradict one another in this field.

5—To constantly and consciously follow up all issues of interest for the country and keeps abreast with all new developments in politics, science, and knowledge. It also seeks to improve life conditions in the political, economic, social, and human fields in a manner that is not contrary to Islamic principles and values, and to heighten awareness of problems that could undermine the society such as drugs and divorce.

6—To draw up the information policy on the basis of well-conceived plans that take into consideration future developments and anticipate and predict events and generate awareness of local, regional, and international events and challenges, as a contingency in case of events, developments, and phenomena that might occur in future.

7—To draw up appropriate plans for dealing with any negative effects that might result from direct foreign [television] reception via satellites.

8—To encourage the establishment of private institutions for measuring public opinion in order to know public views, inclinations, and reactions to the media in order to take the outcome into consideration in media planning.

9—To modernize legislation and regulations in force in the media fields in order to achieve work flexibility and effectiveness.

10—To strive to maintain credibility, impartiality, objectivity, and speed in following up events; to elevate the standard of its analysis and news handling to international level; and to shun all that might create rancor, sedition, and hatred.

11—To underline Kuwait's eminent and outstanding role in the economic, social, political, and human fields on the level of the Arab and Islamic homeland and of the whole world.

12—To make Kuwait ever present in the world media fields in order to project the image of Kuwait as a peace-loving country contributing to world progress.

13—To develop public taste as a way of life, and stressing the importance of art, literature, and creativity in consolidating noble values and developing the society.

14—To be committed to elevating the standard of culture, education, and guidance, proceeding from the premise that every media action is by necessity an educational and cultural action aimed at heightening awareness; and to being a source of information and skills that are necessary for a productive and effective life during the reconstruction stage.

15—To pay attention to the entertainment aspects of the media activity on the basis that any media work should not be boring or oppressive, and that it should be informative and entertaining for the recipient, while respectful of the society and its traditions.

16—To be committed to security awareness based on strengthening the homeland's security at home and abroad by asserting facts, countering campaigns of doubt, and combatting rumors so that no room is left for attempts at undermining security of the homeland and the citizen; to also seek to boost the Kuwaiti citizen's moral spirit in order to consolidate the cohesiveness and solidity of the internal front.

17—To strengthen the family's role as a basic cell for building the society and contributing to the shaping of strong future generations, aware of their responsibilities, generous, educated and conscious.

18—To seek to underline the importance of childhood in building the individual's character; to pay particular attention to this aspect by providing them [children] with educational information material.

19—To pay attention to young people from both sexes and help them to be a constructive and conscious force, and protect them against any prejudicial material by preparing for them special information material that will meet their needs and contribute to their good upbringing.

20—To also assert the role of the woman in building the society as a citizen, mother, wife, working woman, and struggler and to highlight her activities and sacrifices for the sake of the homeland.

21—to be concerned with the rapid technological changes that characterize modern civilization with regard to the revolution in information, communication, and method of operation with the aim of providing and developing the best information services.

22—To sponsor and encourage young talents by offering material and moral support; to promote such talents by providing educational and practical disciplines with the aim of creating manpower resources capable of implementing this policy.

23—To pay particular attention to the use of classical Arabic language, and to direct program writers, preparers, and announcers to use it; to also direct them to improve popular programs using colloquial language by substituting the colloquial with the simple classical.

24—To assert the importance of the popular, Arab, and Islamic heritage, of reviving it, preparing programs about, encouraging its compilation, and publishing it with all means available, with the government providing support for research in this field.

25—To support educational and cultural revival through encouraging researchers and scientists, holding cultural

conferences and seminars, supporting national publishing houses to publish serious Kuwaiti literary works, encouraging local production of specialized magazines that serve the country and the national cause.

26—Sponsoring theaters and fine arts, supporting them, and encouraging them to achieve better production, and striving to widen their existence in order to project Kuwait's cultural and civilized image.

Article 2:

Media institutions in the State of Kuwait are to be notified of this decision in order to take the necessary action regarding it.

Petrochemical Industry Facing Difficulties

92AED436A London AL-WASAT in Arabic
1 Jun 92 p 44

[Article by Muhammad Jamal 'Itabi]

[Text] Jeddah—The petrochemical industry in Kuwait has been experiencing difficulties, especially after the Iraqi invasion. The causes of its crisis are detailed in a paper presented by Hani 'Abd-al-'Aziz Husayn (chairman of the board of the Kuwaiti Petrochemical Industry Company) at the petrochemical and chemical fertilizer marketing conference held in al-Jubayl. These causes include:

1. The forced shutdown of production at the beginning and during several periods of the Iraqi-Iranian war, especially when several effects of the war spilled over into Kuwait, e.g. the setting off of explosions, etc.
2. The sharp drop in world fertilizer prices.
3. The high consumption of inputs at most Kuwaiti fertilizer plants relative to state-of-the-art plants
4. The nonavailability of methane gas in sufficient quantities to exploit the total capacity of Kuwaiti plants, due to a rise in natural gas consumption in Kuwait.

The paper states that the fertilizer industry, despite its difficulties, is Kuwait's primary petrochemical industry. This industry is presently limited to the Petrochemical Industry Company (a subsidiary of the Kuwaiti Oil Organization). Private-sector activity remains marginal, consisting of several minor chemical industries and a melamine plant that was shut down after several years of operation.

Regarding damage incurred by the oil sector and the chemical industries due to the Iraqi invasion, the paper states that, immediately after liberation, Kuwait began to counter the ecological disaster caused by the Iraqis' mining of Kuwaiti oil wells. The last burning well was extinguished in November 1991 in record time (seven months). The Iraqi invasion destroyed most of the oil collection centers, many transport and export pipelines, and sections of ports through which oil and refined products are

exported. Kuwait's refineries, like other utilities in Kuwait, were plundered and destroyed. Kuwait had two of the most modern refineries in the world, al-Ahmadi Port Refinery and 'Abdallah Port Refinery, as well as a slightly older third refinery, al-Shu'aybah Refinery, whose technology, capacity, and output placed it among the world's outstanding refineries. Iraqi forces destroyed units, equipment, pipes, storage tanks, and the entire control room at 'Abdallah Port Refinery. They stole most of the equipment, spare parts, supplies, machinery, and chemicals at these refineries.

Kuwait's petrochemical industry did not escape the destruction and plunder. The Iraqis stole entire units from the ammonia plants; large quantities of spare parts, chemicals, and auxiliary agents; most of the machinery, equipment, laboratory supplies and equipment, and office equipment; and some important documents. They destroyed the ammonia export lines. The condition of the fertilizer plants deteriorated after the invasion due to a lack of maintenance, even when the Iraqis operated them to produce fertilizer for transport to Iraq. Also, established techniques for shutting down plants for long periods were not observed when operations at the fertilizer plants were suspended during and after the war.

According to the paper, al-Ahmadi Refinery and 'Abdallah Refinery were repaired and are now operating at a capacity of 100,000 b/d each, the Petrochemical Industry Company has resumed output, and the fertilizer plants began operating in February 1992.

Regarding the petrochemical industry's short-term future, the paper points to a major change in this industry's strategy, namely the decision to provide an opportunity for international partners to implement the olefins project to allow Kuwait to benefit from its technical and marketing expertise and marketing outlets.

The paper states that the long-term future of the Kuwaiti chemical industry depends greatly on the availability of inputs (e.g. natural gas, etc.) and on investments by the oil sector to provide these inputs, at a time when such investments have become extremely costly.

It will also depend on the degree of success of the petrochemical complex now being planned, which may or may not be built with foreign partners.

National Assembly Reduces Family Compensation

924E0458C London AL-HAYAH in Arabic
3 Jun 92 p 5

[Article by Hamad al-Jasir: "The Minister of Finance Considers Implementation Impossible 'Because of the Current Circumstances'; 'Parliament Approves and Government Opposes Paying Damages to Every Family for the Occupation Damages']

[Text] Kuwait—The Kuwaiti Parliament in its weekly session yesterday approved a proposal to pay damages to the families that suffered from the Iraqi occupation

amounting to 5,000 Kuwaiti Dinars (\$17,000). The Parliament ended in this session a heated dialogue with the government about the payment of these damages as some Parliament members had requested the payment of 20,000 Kuwaiti Dinars (\$70,000) to every head of a Kuwaiti family. The proposal was cut down to one fourth of the proposed amount.

Budget Deficit

Kuwaiti Minister of Finance, Mr. Nasir 'Abdallah al-Radwan, expressed the government's reservations regarding the proposal, declaring before Parliament members, "There are many responsibilities currently being shouldered by the government that would not enable it to pay the requested amounts." He added that the budget deficit of this year is more than 5 billion Kuwaiti Dinars (\$17 billion) with expenditures amounting to 6 billion Kuwaiti Dinars, including the non-recurrent expenditures for defense and reconstruction, while revenues are 800 million Kuwaiti Dinars only. Mr. al-Radwan affirmed in his response to the parliamentary proposal that the government has proposed many projects to "ease living conditions in the country in the wake of the liberation, including salary increases, and the cancellation of financial obligations and debts due from Kuwaiti citizens." After the Parliament took its vote and approved the proposal, the Minister of Finance said to the members "... my government would have liked to implement any proposal that would give the citizens better living conditions, yet this proposal is practically impossible to implement because of the current conditions." By saying this, he has indicated that the government might refuse the proposal. It is worth mentioning that payment for damages to the Kuwaiti families that suffered from the Iraqi occupation has been an important item on the agenda of the Parliament since it resumed its sessions last September. Many members consider these damages the basic duty which they have to render to the Kuwait people. The Speaker of the Parliament, Mr. 'Abdulaziz al-Masa'id, has repeatedly mentioned that he had a gentleman's agreement with the supreme leadership of the country to approve the payment in return for the Parliament's approval of the proposal to buy the debts of the banking system, which it did last month. Some experts of the Ministry of Finance told "AL-HAYAH" that there are severe economic and technical difficulties that hinder payment of these damages. On the one hand, the government does not have enough liquidity to finance the payments, as it is difficult to come up with enough cash to pay 560 million Kuwaiti Dinars (\$ 1.9 billion) to approximately 112,000 heads of families who would throng to the banks as soon as the damages had been approved. On the other hand, pumping these funds into the internal markets would result in large and unrealistic price increases; also, such payments would make Kuwaiti citizens lose their interest in seeking compensation from the United Nations Fund that is to collect revenues from Iraqi oil exports.

Residency Law Violators Investigated
92AE0458D London AL-HAYAH in Arabic
2 Jun 92 p 3

[Article by Hamad al-Jasir: "Kuwait Rounds Up Violators of Residency Laws"]

[Text] Kuwait—Yesterday Kuwaiti security forces launched a campaign to find thousands of aliens suspected to be in violation of the residency laws. The grace period granted by the Ministry of Interior to obtain a residency permit expired two days ago. The authorities have taken steps to capture the violators with police running patrols and erecting road blocks to search vehicles and pedestrians all over the city of Kuwait. The security forces have questioned hundreds of people about their residency status; some of them have been arrested. The security campaign aims at putting an end to the illegal residency cases that includes tens of thousands of aliens from different nationalities. Most significant among the categories affected by the campaign are the Palestinians, especially those holding Jordanian passports. Thousands of Palestinians were disappointed when the Kuwaiti cabinet ended its weekly sessions two days ago without discussing or prolonging the grace period. Minister of Interior Sheikh Ahmad al-Hamud al-Sabah stressed a few days ago that the deadline of May 31, 1992 is "final and shall not be renewed."

Waiting

Many Jordanians and Palestinians, as well as citizens of other countries such as Iraq, Yemen and Sudan, who have not obtained residency permits have had to limit their movements and avoid the checkpoints in the streets. Many of them have decided to stay at home, waiting and hoping to obtain a residency permit one way or another, or simply waiting for some political change in their favor. There is still about twenty or twenty-five thousand Palestinians living in Kuwait, half of whom are holders of Jordanian passports. Out of those, about 40 percent have managed to obtain citizenship, while hundreds of applications are being submitted daily to the Office of the Minister of the Interior. Many of them are being rejected, especially those which receive a "negative" sign from the Department of State Security in the Ministry of the Interior. The Minister of the Interior Sheikh Ahmad al-Hamud has previously ordered the exemption of the Palestinian families that have children in school from the above-mentioned deadline so that these students may not be prevented from finishing the current scholastic year. This exemption is valid for two months only, until the 31st of July, 1992, when the school year ends. This exemption has prompted some families to register their children in schools in order to qualify for the exemption. Some Palestinians and other Arabs consider leaving Kuwait the worst result of the Iraqi invasion, because Kuwait is a true country for them in which they were born and lived and also in which their

children have become accustomed to a certain standard of living and to services not available in their countries of origin.

MOROCCO

Opposition, Government Proposals on Electoral Law

Chronology of Events

92AF0833A Casablanca AL-ITTihad AL-ISHTIRAKI in Arabic 7 May 92 p 3

[Article by Abu-Raniya: "Chronology of Bill, Proposals To Amend Election Laws"]

[Text] 20 December 1991: Democratic and national parties submit proposed law to establish new commune electorate lists.

24 December 1991: Same parties submit two proposals. The first concerns organizing the election campaign; the second seeks to deter electoral violations.

27 January 1992: Proposed law to organize commune elections submitted by aforementioned opposition groups is registered.

20 April 1992: The government presents a draft law concerning elections for review by parliamentarians. The same day it is referred to the Committee on Justice, Legislation, and Public Function [CJLPF], which discusses it three days later.

22 April 1992: Opposition party representatives in the legislature point out that the CJLPF committee meeting was characterized by breaches in the rules. Speaking for the opposition, Mr. Muhammad al-Khalifah announced it had taken the position not to participate in CJLPF activities regarding election laws.

24 April 1992: Opposition party officials (Socialist Union [of Popular Forces] [USFP], [People's Democratic] Action Organization [PDAO]) submit a memorandum regarding election proposals to Mr. Ahmad Rida Kadirah, counselor to his majesty the king. The memorandum clarifies the positions of the four parties on the [draft] law submitted by the government regarding the establishment and review of electorate lists, the organization of elections to urban and rural commune councils, and the parties' demands that an independent national agency be established to supervise the election process and ensure that elections are honest and impartial.

Officials of the aforementioned parties accompanied by Messrs. Fathallah Oulaalou of the USFP and Saad al-Alami, of the Istiqlal faction, meet with the speaker of the legislature to inform him of their position and to assure him that the matter is not about boycotting the CJLPF or any other parliamentary agency and that the opposition representatives' failure to attend the CJLPF meeting was not an ordinary absence, as was reported,

but was done to avoid participating in the discussion of the government's elections bill.

25 April 1992: Opposition party legislators (Istiqlal, USFP, Party of Progress and Socialism [PPS], and PDAO) hold a press conference at the legislature, where they announce that their parties did not take part in discussing the draft law presented by the government regarding establishing and reviewing electorate lists and organizing elections for urban and rural commune councils. They said that their parties are demanding that an independent national agency be created to supervise election preparations and to ensure that they are honest and impartial by specifying the provisions and procedures this would require. The agency would monitor every phase of the elections, beginning with establishing electorate lists, voter registration, determining voting districts and how the elections will be conducted, receiving nominations, organizing election campaigns, using the public audio and visual media, organizing the voting process, and announcing the results.

26 April 1992: His majesty the king receives the following political party leaders: Mohamed Boucetta, secretary general of the Istiqlal party, Mohamed al-Yazighi, USFP acting senior clerk, Ali Yata, PPS secretary general, and Mohamed Bensaid, PDAO secretary general.

27 April 1992: Mr. Ahmad Rida Akdirah, counselor to his majesty the king, receives the aforementioned party officials who present him with a memorandum for submission to the king in which the four parties ask for his majesty's arbitration of the parliamentary disagreement over measures taken by the government in submitting its two draft bills on elections. These parties consider this measure to be inappropriate, because the precarious nature of this stage, and the importance of election laws for the present and future of the country, necessitate the existence of a framework for profound dialogue to ensure that comprehensive national accord is achieved.

29 April 1992: His majesty the king delivers a speech to announce formation of two committees: an arbitration committee to review election laws and a second one to monitor the election process.

1 May 1992: His majesty the king chairs a working session in Rabat with members of the arbitration committee to review the election laws. The committee is composed of leaders of political parties or their representatives, the minister of justice, the minister of interior, and the secretary general of the government.

4 May 1992: Arbitration committee holds two meetings in Rabat.

5 May 1992: Arbitration committee continues its activities in Rabat.

Draft Law Discussed

92AF0833B Casablanca AL-ITTIHAD AL-ISHTIRAKI
in Arabic 7 May 92 p 3

[Interview with Professor Abdelkader Bayane by Nouredine Mouftah; place and date not given: "Dr. Abdelkader Bayane Talks to AL-ITTIHAD AL-ISHTIRAKI About Elections Bill, Opposition Proposals: 'Government's Bill Steps Backwards From Original 1959 Law; Opposition Proposals Attempted To Restrict Negative Aspects of Previous Experiences;' Contents of Government's Bill, Opposition Proposals, Essential Points of Difference Between Them On Voting Age, Balloting Methods, Supervising Election Honesty, Role of Executive Authority, Local Authorities...Points Discussed by Dr. Abdelkader Bayane, Specialist Monitoring Electoral Law Amendment Efforts"]

[Text] [AL-ITTIHAD AL-ISHTIRAKI] In your capacity as a specialist, we would first like to know the context of the current discussion of the new draft election laws.

[Bayane] The bill currently before the arbitration committee amends a group of provisions related to commune elections, including decrees dated 1 September 1959 regarding commune council elections and organizing elections, and the 19 March 1977 decree concerning establishment of new commune electorate lists.

The present bill, number 12-92, relates to establishing and reviewing electorate lists and organizing elections for the rural and urban commune councils.

[AL-ITTIHAD AL-ISHTIRAKI] The opposition earlier presented proposed laws on the subject. In order to inform our readers of what has happened and what is happening, we would like to start by learning what those laws were.

[Bayane] Yes, the opposition parties presented the following proposed laws on this subject last December:

- A proposed law concerning the organization of commune elections.
- A proposed law concerning the organization of the election campaign.
- A proposed law concerning establishing new commune electorate lists.
- A proposed law seeking to deter electoral violations.

[AL-ITTIHAD AL-ISHTIRAKI] Does the opposition have other, similar proposed laws apart from these four?

[Bayane] The opposition earlier announced that it is preparing other draft laws related to elections. Of these, we should mention the draft law to introduce necessary amendments to the original provisions of the May 1977 edict organizing the legislature and election of its members, in addition to texts of laws concerning elections for the professional guilds, the chambers of industry and commerce, the chambers of agriculture, and the chambers of traditional industries, and the law concerning the

12 September 1963 edict related to provincial and prefecture councils in the context of the provincial councils. Another group of laws, not directly related to elections, includes draft laws concerning workers' representatives.

[AL-ITTIHAD AL-ISHTIRAKI] The government, in turn, presented a draft law related to the elections that caused a stir in the legislature. Could you tell us something about this bill?

[Bayane] The government bill, recently presented to the legislature, was the subject of discussion regarding failure to follow procedural rules. This brought the work of the legislative committee to a halt, as we all know, led to the opposition's demand for arbitration by his majesty the king, and resulted in the committee that is currently reviewing the subject.

[AL-ITTIHAD AL-ISHTIRAKI] In terms of form, we note that opposition party proposals are in sections, or split up, whereas the government draft is a single text. Does this have any particular significance?

[Bayane] The government draft attempted to combine the various issues related to commune elections in its text. It is divided into four parts. The first concerns establishing and reviewing electorate lists for rural and urban communes; the second concerns organizing commune elections, including everything related to nominations, the electoral process, and disputes; the third concerns the election campaign; and the fourth part defines electoral violations and related penalties.

We should bear in mind that the opposition presented four proposals in an attempt to distinguish each of the election-related topics, but this is a matter of form and raises no major problem.

[AL-ITTIHAD AL-ISHTIRAKI] When we compare the government draft with the opposition's proposals, I believe there are some major issues under dispute. I would like to start by raising the issue of voting age or "electoral majority."

[Bayane] A close reading of the government draft and the opposition's proposals reveals great divergence on many issues, including age.

The government draft sets the voting age at 20, considered progress compared with the original provision that set it at 21. However, it fails to express the aspirations of young people or to conform to the royal directives embodied in the spirit of the king's address given before the recent debate by local communes, which emphasized the role and participation of young people in political life.

I believe that the participation of youth demands that they vote when they are 18 years of age.

In an array of other laws, we find that 18-year-olds may assume many responsibilities. A public job requires that an employee be 18. In giving him a position, we give him

responsibility, and he is able to make decisions. I believe that the responsibility of voting is less than that of employee decision making.

Although the personal status code sets the age of majority at 21, we see that the marriage age for a young man is 18, while that for a girl is 16. Building a family, of course, is a great responsibility. Why give a young man the responsibility of overseeing a family at a particular age, yet prevent him from practicing the right to vote at the same age?

We would add further that a young man today is more mature than he was in the past. An 18-year-old is now more aware and qualified than his counterpart who lived in years past. There has been progress, and we should not lag behind it.

When we review other systems throughout the world, we find that most, including France and Algeria, have set 18 as the voting age.

Moreover, we are in the process of settling the issue of our territorial unity via plebiscite, in order to preserve our sovereignty. One of the rules on which agreement was reached is that plebiscite participants will be those 18 and older, so at a minimum we also need to grant our 18-year-old youth the right to vote.

The opposition feels that youth must be allowed to participate. It begins by granting the opportunity to those who have reached 18.

[AL-ITTIHAD AL-ISHTIRAKI] I believe the second basic point in the draft election law is the method of balloting. Could you provide the reader with definitions of individual and slate balloting?

[Bayane] Balloting methods are the means of determining the persons who will assume certain posts by election. They all come under the framework of electoral democracy, and every country selects one of them. We can distinguish two basic types among the many methods. The first is the proportional individual ballot, which takes several forms, and the second is proportional balloting by slate.

There are two forms for the proportional individual ballot. It can be either a single round, with the winner being the person who receives a proportional majority in one round, which is the system followed in Morocco since the first elections in May 1960 and confirmed in the government's draft law, or it can be in two rounds, as applied in France. This means that all of the candidates are presented in the first round, and in principle, the candidate who obtains an absolute majority, i.e., 51 percent of the vote, is considered the winner in the first round. Otherwise a second round is held, in which there are usually two persons. The person receiving the proportional majority is the winner.

Proportional balloting by slate involves competition between slates, that is, the existence of platforms, i.e., parties and groups sharing a particular platform. Under

this method, therefore, the public is called upon more to choose between platforms, rather than individuals.

There are [various] ways of calculating votes by slate. Without going into detail, this method involves parties, agencies, or sides participating to the extent of their relative presence in the electorate. All factions present in the political arena are given a proportional chance at representation. If a faction has a majority [presence], it gets majority [representation], and if it is a minority in the community, it still gets represented.

The important thing is that the slate enforces representation of all existing political elements, as opposed to individual balloting, which shuts the door on minorities by representing only those individuals who get 51 percent of the votes. Should someone get only 49 percent, he fails to win.

[AL-ITTIHAD AL-ISHTIRAKI] The opposition adopted the system of proportional balloting by slate. Could we know the reason?

[Bayane] The national parties did not just make this choice today. Certainly, everyone remembers that in voting modality discussions during the early years of 1957-59, the national parties raised the issue of balloting by slate because of the advantages mentioned earlier. These may be summed up as the principle of defending a platform, rather than an individual, and giving all elements and interest groups a chance to be represented in elected institutions.

[AL-ITTIHAD AL-ISHTIRAKI] The basic feature of our elections was that they were not honest. Does anything in the bills currently being floored attempt to protect the forthcoming elections from fraud?

[Bayane] Democratic selection is a basic plank in national party platforms. This plank requires that elections be democratic, which means that they must be honest. The opposition always believes that all institutions, especially elected ones, must reflect the true political map of the electorate.

Therefore, if elections lack honesty and credibility, we can not speak of real democracy or of elections, because the elections themselves are the means of achieving democracy. In the absence of democracy, one has appointments, not elections, and there is a big difference between the two.

Earlier experience, sadly, records many violations that took the substance out of elections. Consequently, the opposition put forward some proposals for legal conditions that would ensure honest, credible, and transparent elections, to the extent possible.

Nonetheless, we must objectively acknowledge that provisions of the original 1959 law, however flawed, offered tremendous potential. The elections would not have occurred in the manner they did if these provisions had been applied and respected.

Everyone knows the law was neither applied nor respected. So here we must emphatically stress that it is not a matter simply of the law. Actual practice has to correspond to the law.

Even so, the law has to be clear, transparent, and credible, and then we have to make sure it is applied in the same spirit.

[AL-ITTIHAD AL-ISHTIRAKI] Does anything in the government draft support this approach? What proposed laws on this subject has the opposition put forward?

[Bayane] In principle, the government bill offers nothing new compared to the original provisions. We might say it reformulates original provisions, but not as far as polling places, lists, or anything else is concerned. We cannot say there are fundamental changes. At most, the changes are very, very minor.

Meanwhile, the opposition's proposals tried to put many issues into law to limit the various negative features that tarnished previous experiences, whether due to the provisions themselves or because of practice. Here the matter concerns an array of issues related to the administration's having taken a neutral stance, rather than being a party to the elections. At the same time, the opposition tried to secure a series of guarantees on conducting the voting, delivering the records, and the rights of citizens to appeal.

Opposition proposals generally tried to enact all of the guarantees needed to oblige everyone to respect and observe the law, be they citizens taking part as either voters or candidates, or parties entrusted with supervising the elections.

[AL-ITTIHAD AL-ISHTIRAKI] There is another basic point related to interventions by the executive authority. How are these manifested in the bill and in the proposals?

[Bayane] Of course, every legal text must have provisions concerning its application. In this context, the government's draft law contains 11 operative decrees generally related to setting the various timetables for establishing electorate lists, for appeals, balloting, or the election campaign. Keep in mind that the opposition had proposed that many of these timetables be specifically provided for in law. We note that all but one of these decrees is issued upon the recommendation of the minister of interior.

The executive authority is also to be found in certain decisions made by the minister of interior, as when a commune is unable to establish or review the electoral list within the time frames specified in the decrees. He makes the decision to set new deadlines. We also find that electoral districts are created by decrees issued by the minister of interior, and he decides what colors will be assigned to the candidates of political organizations.

The minister of interior is also responsible for decisions rescheduling dates for elections that have been cancelled by the courts.

One has to remember that the opposition in a recent joint statement, on the occasion of arbitration, [as published] and among the basic reasons that caused the opposition to withdraw from a discussion of the draft law was that it fails to provide for an independent agency to supervise the elections. Apart from that, there is an important proposal urging the need to form an independent national commission to oversee the elections. Many of these present matters have to happen under the supervision and with the participation of this national commission to oversee the elections.

[AL-ITTIHAD AL-ISHTIRAKI] Including electoral redistricting?

[Bayane] Of course. One of the proposals is that there are many operational procedures issued by government authorities that should not be implemented until the national commission is brought into the process, including electoral redistricting.

[AL-ITTIHAD AL-ISHTIRAKI] Could we say in conclusion that the government draft is an improvement over the original law, and the opposition's proposals are even more progressive?

[Bayane] It is difficult to say that the government's draft law is a notable advance over the original provisions of the 1959 law. We could go on record that there are some new proposals, but they are very limited, such as the requirement to turn over some [balloting] records. More importantly, it takes some steps backward when compared with the 1959 law. With respect to appealing an election, for example, the original law gave the court of first instance 40 days to make a decision on appeals related to electoral processes. Now in this draft, we find no such time limit is specified. Opposition proposals also demanded that time limits be set for the administrative chamber [as published], because in previous experience this time limit was left undetermined. We saw people continue to carry out their duties, while the supreme council failed to issue a decision until just a few months before the duties were to end.

Government, Opposition Views

92AF0833C Casablanca AL-ITTIHAD AL-ISHTIRAKI
in Arabic 7 May 92 pp 4-5

[Article by Abderrahim Arri: "Points of Disagreement Between Government, National Parties Concerning Electoral Laws; Opposition Proposals: Expanded Electorate Base, Providing Guarantees of Honesty; Government Bill: Absolute Endorsement of Ministry of Interior Control"]

[Text]

Major Points of Difference on Electorate Lists

Opposition Proposal: In Article 2, the opposition calls for setting the voting age at 18.

Government Bill: In Article 3 of its draft, the government sets the voting age at 20.

Opposition Proposal: In Article 5, the opposition demands that each commune have an administrative committee to establish the commune electorate lists, with its headquarters at offices of the commune council. It would receive and research registration applications, establish temporary electorate lists and revised schedules, and compile the [final] electorate lists. The committee is to be constituted of the following:

- The chairman of the commune council, or his deputy, as chairman;
- The senior deputy of the governor, prefect, pasha, qa'id, or whomever they shall designate, as official member;
- An official member and a deputy member, both of whom are proficient in reading and writing, to be selected by the commune council from its membership. The deputy member shall be delegated to act on behalf of the official member, should he be absent or otherwise incapacitated.

If necessary, however, the administrative committee may decide to create one or more subcommittees to assist it with receiving and researching registration applications.

The aforementioned subcommittees are to be composed of the following:

- An authorized representative of the chairman of the commune council, as chairman;
- An authorized representative of the local administrative authority, as an official member;
- Two members selected by the commune council, one as an official member, the other as a deputy.

Government Bill: In its draft, the government retains the right of the senior deputy of the governor, prefect, pasha, qa'id, or their representatives to chair the committee, while the post of deputy [chairman] is assigned to the chairman of the commune council or his representative.

The government draft gives the chairman of the commune council the right to choose one of the two main members, while the local authority appoints the other. The same rule applies to choosing standby members.

In forming the subcommittee, the draft assigns the chairmanship to the representative of the administrative authority. The local authority is also given the right to select a main member and a standby. (See Article 7)

Opposition Proposal: The proposal says only that the meeting date of the administrative committee, and when necessary the subcommittee or subcommittees, will be set by decree.

Committee deliberations on registration applications shall not be valid unless all three members of the committee are present. Decisions are based on a majority vote. (Article 8)

Government Bill: The government bill specifies that the date of the committee meeting will be set by a decree issued upon recommendation of the minister of interior.

In the event of a disagreement during the committee's discussions of a specific application, and a tie vote among its four members, the side of the chairman, i.e., the authority's representative, shall prevail. (Article 9)

Opposition Proposal: The opposition proposal expands the citizen's right to obtain a copy of the electoral list, either by photocopying, copying by hand, or any other method. (Articles 9, 10)

Government Bill: Meanwhile, Article 10 of the government draft specifies that any concerned individual may see the list and make a copy of it at the same location (something impossible to do). (See Article 9, also)

Opposition Proposal: The decision committee shall be composed of the members of the administrative committee, plus two voters proficient in reading and writing to be appointed by the commune council from among registered voters on the commune's electoral list. It shall meet under the chairmanship of the chairman of the commune council, or his deputy, on a date to be set by decree. (Article 10)

Government Bill: Under the government draft, meanwhile, the decision committee is composed of members of the administrative committee, plus two voters, one appointed by the commune council and the other appointed by the local authority. It shall meet on a date specified by a decree issued upon the recommendation of the minister of interior. (Article 11)

Opposition Proposal: The proposal presented by the opposition limits filing appeals of decision committee decisions to the individuals concerned. (Article 11)

Government Bill: The draft expands the same right by giving it to the wali, governor, prefect, or the senior deputy of the governor, prefect, pasha, or qa'id. (Article 12)

Opposition Proposal: The opposition intends that when records are stamped and verified as to accuracy in four copies by members of the administrative committee, following inclusion of the electoral district number and the number of the polling place within the district, the chairman of the administrative committee is to send one of the copies to the king's agent at the court of first instance in whose jurisdiction the commune is located, without [delay] in a manner that guarantees [delivery]. After being recorded, the other three copies are to be placed in the commune's archives.

The king's agent is to review the electorate lists sent to him and write a report on them in two copies, one to be

sent to the chairman of the concerned administrative committee for the purpose of taking whatever steps are required. The other copy is to be put with the electoral records pertaining to it, once the agent puts his seal on it at the recorder's office in the court of first instance. (See the last paragraph of Article 14 and Article 15 of the proposal)

Government Bill: The government overlooks this demand and pays no attention to it.

Opposition Proposal: In Article 16, the proposal provides that every voter will be granted a permanent card, titled the "voter's card." It sets the card's specifications, conditions for delivering it, and how it may be amended and makes it subject to the same requirements applied to the national [identification] card, including the obligation that it contain a personal photograph of the bearer.

Government Bill: The government draft also overlooks this demand and fails to address it.

Opposition Proposal: [No corresponding opposition proposal]

Government Bill: One loophole in the draft (Article 23) is that it fails to provide for reducing the time periods set by the minister of interior for establishing or reviewing electorate lists that can not be established or reviewed in a commune.

Major Points of Difference on Organizing Elections

Opposition Proposal: Article 2 of this proposal provides that the term of office of commune council members begins in the first half of June of the last year of the appointment period.

Government Bill: The term of office of urban and rural commune council members starts at the beginning of the term of members of the legislature and ends when it does. (Article 28 of Part 2)

Opposition Proposal: Article 25 of the proposal sets the nomination age at 21 full years.

Government Bill: The draft sets the nomination age at 25 full years. (Article 30)

Opposition Proposal: The opposition proposal adopts the system of slate balloting in commune elections. (Article 3)

Government Bill: The draft adopts the system of individual ballots in the commune elections.

Opposition Proposal: The last paragraph of Article 2 provides that the polling date will be established by a decree published not less than 90 days earlier.

Government Bill: The government retains publication of the decree at only 45 days earlier. (Article 33)

Opposition Proposal: Opposition proposals set the time limit for submitting nominations at eight days. (Article 30 of the proposed law to organize commune elections)

The period of the electoral campaign is set at two weeks. (Article 2 of the proposed law to organize the electoral campaign)

Government Bill: The government draft leaves commune election nominations and the election campaign timetables to be specified by decree. This is impermissible and a step backward from the 1959 laws.

Opposition Proposal: In its proposal, the opposition recommends assigning colors, with the exception of red, green, and white, to slates of political bodies taking part in the elections, and to other slates, as well.

It proposes that colors be set by a decree published not less than 50 days before the date set for voting.

Government Bill: Article 35 of the government draft specifies that the colors of candidates of political bodies are to be assigned by decree of the minister of interior.

At the same time, this article authorizes the chairman of the administrative committee (i.e., a representative of the authority under the draft) to determine the color to be assigned to each independent candidate, without specifying a time frame.

Opposition Proposal: The opposition proposes that the polling place chairman be appointed by the administrative committee. The basic requirement is that he not hold a civil service job with local or commune authorities or with commune agencies. (Article 44)

Government Bill: Article 39 invests the wali, the governor, or the prefect with the right to appoint employees and workers from public administration, the local communes, public institutions, or commune voters to the chairmanship of polling places.

Opposition Proposal: The opposition specified an array of documents and records (10 points) to be put at each polling place. At the top of the list is a transparent ballot box of glass or plastic with two locks and two different keys. (Articles 47 and 49)

Government Bill: The government draft pays no attention to this point.

Opposition Proposal: Opposition proposals sought to control many aspects related to conducting the voting process, writing reports, the ballot counting process, declaring results, and placing documents with the court of first instance, in order to provide more guarantees.

Government Bill: The government draft leaps over this, ignoring most of it.

Opposition Proposal: The opposition proposal provides that polling places will be created by decision of the administrative committee. (Article 43)

Government Bill: It gives this right to the chairman of the administrative committee, who is a representative of the local authority. (Article 38)

Opposition Proposal: The opposition proposal requires the documentation and recording of observations made during the voting, after establishing voter identity. (Article 53)

Government Bill: The government draft is silent on this point.

Opposition Proposal: In the same article, the opposition proposes putting a special indelible ink on each voter's fingers after establishing his identity.

Government Bill: In Article 43 of the draft, the government limits this possibility to those voters not having a photo identity card available.

Opposition Proposal: In Article 62 of the opposition proposal, we read of the need to record disputed ballots, their number, and reasons for the dispute in a report to be signed by the chairman and all other members.

Government Bill: In Article 45, the government draft merely provides that invalid ballots, disputed ballots, and illegal covers are to be added to the report. It places each of these three types in a sealed envelope.

Opposition Proposal: To achieve guarantees, the opposition proposal grants candidates or their representatives the right to monitor vote tabulation processes as observers. (Article 57)

Government Bill: We fail to find these guarantees in the government draft.

Opposition Proposal: In the subsequent article (58), we read that at the end of the voting process, prior to opening the ballot box, the polling place must burn all unused ballots to avoid forgery and mixing with the ballots actually cast that are inside the box.

Government Bill: We also fail to find these guarantees in the draft.

Opposition Proposal: The opposition proposes that valid ballots be retained for judges to refer to as means of evidence.

Government Bill: The government draft, meanwhile, requires that these ballots be burned as soon as the tabulation process is over. (See the last paragraph of Article 45)

Opposition Proposal: Another point of difference relates to the time limit for seeing polling place reports. The opposition sets it at five days following the filing of the reports. (Article 76)

Government Bill: The first paragraph of Article 49 of the draft reduces the period to four days.

Opposition Proposal: When an appeal is filed with the administrative court, the court must rule within 10 days from the date the request is filed.

If the court fails to rule within the period referred to in the first paragraph of this article, the nomination is considered accepted. (Article 80)

Government Bill: The draft contains the same time limit (Article 54), but it is silent on failure to rule within it.

Opposition Proposal: In Article 85, the opposition sets the time limit for ruling on election appeals. The proposal specifies that the administrative court shall rule initially, finally, and publicly within no more than 40 days from the date of recording the initial lawsuit complaint.

Government Bill: The draft leaves the door open. It fails to set a time limit for ruling on appeals of election processes. An administrative court could possibly fail to render a decision until much later.

Opposition Proposal: We find the same omission when reading time limits for appeals to the supreme council. Article 86 (paragraph 4) of the proposal sets the time limit at two months.

Government Bill: The draft fails to set this time limit.

Major Points of Difference on Election Campaigning

Opposition Proposal: Opposition parties presented a number of additions, including, for example:

- Setting time limits for election campaigning and when it is to end (Article 2). The proposal specifies that campaigns to elect members of parliament shall begin three full weeks prior to election day. Campaigns to elect members of commune, prefecture, and provincial councils and professional guilds are to open two full weeks before the election.
- In all cases, campaigns shall end 24 hours before election day.
- Political parties are entitled to use Moroccan radio and television in their election campaigns.... Allocation dates and times are to be set by drawing lots. The lottery is to be conducted in the presence of representatives of the political parties, who must be invited to attend by legal means. (Article 3)
- A financial authorization is to be opened in the state's public budget to be allocated to help cover the costs of election campaigns.
- Such contributory allocations are to be distributed immediately following the announcement of the final results of each election in proportion to the number of votes received by each party. (Article 4)
- No political party or candidate may receive material assistance of any kind, directly or indirectly, from a foreign source. (Article 5)

Government Bill: The draft ignores these points, failing to address them.

Opposition Proposal: The opposition proposal has the administrative committee designate election advertisement locations at least two days before the date the election campaign begins, i.e., 17 days prior to election day. (Article 6)

Government Bill: The government draft sets the time at 14 days prior to election day (Article 64)

Opposition Proposal: In the same article, the opposition proposes increasing the number of locations for placing election advertisements to reduce the chaos of sticking posters outside these sites.

Government Bill: The draft retains the same number of locations as the original provision.

Opposition Proposal: In Article 7, the proposal requires the governor, prefect, or district head to apply the requirements of Article 6 (i.e., it charges him with overseeing advertisement locations) in the event the entrusted authority refuses or is lax in carrying out these requirements.

Government Bill: This is absent from the draft.

Major Points of Disagreement Over Deterring Electoral Violations

Opposition Proposal: The proposal combines jailing or imprisonment (depending on length of time) with a fine in the event a violation is detected (Articles 1 and 2, for example). The provision is harsher if the violator is a public employee or civil servant.

Government Bill: The draft leaves the sentence at only one of the two penalties, i.e., either jailing (and imprisonment) or a fine (Article 73, for example). The draft leaves the penalty universal. It is not harsher if the violator is a public employee or civil servant.

Opposition Proposal: [No corresponding opposition proposal]

Government Bill: Article 89 of the government draft states: "Under no circumstances shall a penalty judgement result in voiding the elections."

The opposition is appealing this, because if it fails to invalidate the results, what is the purpose of going to trial? Moreover, what guarantees of honest elections are there?

The danger of this article is that aides of the authority may, for example, snatch the ballot boxes and forge the results. If they are brought to trial, we shall reap nothing.

Eighteen-Year-Old Youth

92AF0833D Casablanca AL-ITTIHAD AL-ISHTIRAKI
in Arabic 7 May 92 p 5

[Unsigned article: "Eighteen-Year Olds Discuss Their Importance to Voting: Response to Government Plan by Those Concerned"]

[Text] Involving youth in political life is now causing a dispute between the government and the nation's democratic parties. The government has proposed lowering the voting age one year from the original 1959 law setting the age at 21, while the national parties have reconfirmed their old proposal in principle of giving 18-year-olds the right to vote.

For our part, we did not want to let this issue pass without letting 18-year-olds say how they view the national parties and the government's position that they are unqualified to bear voting responsibility.

A group of male and female students were gathered on a corner across from the secondary school's main entrance, talking boisterously. I felt compelled to crash their little world and ask if any of them were 18. My question first surprised them, but when I told them my purpose, a young man and woman about to take this year's baccalaureate exam came forward.

[AL-ITTIHAD AL-ISHTIRAKI] Rashid, in its draft election law the government feels that you, for example, are not up to the level of participating in voting. Is this true?

Rashid responded to my question with a smile. "The government has never felt we were up to the level. How do you expect it to view us as up to the level now...?"

He added, "Frankly, I do not know how the last elections went, because I was very small. Now, however, after hearing so much about the elections and allowing youth to participate in politics, I have become interested in the subject.

"I know the parties. I know a little about the tendencies of most of them. I know Moroccan history and a bit about the opposition. I do not see why I could not differentiate between two candidates. We are at a time now when we know everything. We very much want to take part in voting, but they want to withhold this right from us."

About to explode, Thurayya jumped in.

"I do not know what is more difficult, the baccalaureate exams or voting. I always go to the commune, follow what is happening, and hear what is happening in parliament, especially what happened to the censorship petition. Why should I be unable to distinguish someone who would help us from someone else?"

"The problem in this country is that I could be married already and have children. What is more difficult, the responsibility of caring for my children or choosing one of the candidates?"

There was an incessant flow of people on the main street passing through the university campus, faculties, and higher institutes in the town of al-'Irfan, on the outskirts of Rabat. I was looking for someone who looked young. I stopped a number of students who looked the age, but most of the time they turned out to be over 19.

Aminah and Muna allowed me to reach my goal, ending a search that had nearly exhausted me. Both are first-year students at the faculty of law; neither were over 19.

Muna said, "My friend and I belong to no particular political organization or tendency, but we are both strugglers in the context of NUMS [National Union of Moroccan Students]. Despite being independents, we are 'progressives.' We are opposed to thousands of students being deprived of their right to vote, because this amounts to depriving us of choosing those we feel are qualified to represent us and express our interests. I believe that a young man or woman is grown up at 18, or perhaps even earlier."

In a disdainful tone, Aminah said, "I am now in the first year of law school; yet the government believes that I have not reached the age of voting majority. I am confident that I know many things that some of the candidates may not know."

"The world is progressing. We hear that in most countries those who are 18 are eligible to take part in choosing who will represent them. I say here frankly, there are those who do not want us to take part because they are afraid of our votes."

In traveling from the town of al-'Irfan to the world of hard work, you feel as if you have traveled thousands of miles.

Zahrah was born in late 1972. She works in homes to help her father, a construction worker, support a family of many people. She stopped studying before receiving a primary school certificate, but she is interested in the news, always watches television, and continually reads newspapers and magazines.

When I raised the subject with Zahrah, she said, "Those in the opposition are right. This is a new generation that knows everything from the time they are 14 or 15 [massu al-daran wa-la al-darabat]. This is the age of speed, as they say—look at France, when a person is 18, he is a man and makes his own way..."

A group of young men working in a workshop expressed a position similar to that of Zahrah.

It is true that they were preoccupied with things other than the elections, but when I explained the various aspects of the subject to them, one called 'Umar said, "The government kicked us out of school and locked us up at home to make a living. How can you expect them to tell us to vote, when they know we will never vote for them?"

About to turn 19, 'Umar's friend Hasan said, "We hardly have to do anything, and they put us in jail. When we strike, we are adults. But when it comes to something like voting, they tell you we are too young. We are adults. We know who won the elections, because we see them dozing on television."

There were more statements along the same lines, but the point is young people lack confidence in present electoral institutions. They have no reason to believe in the honesty and credibility of elections to come.

These are young people responding to the government without intermediaries. Will the draft laws remain as they are in the face of reality?

ANWAL Chief Editor on Press Restrictions

92AF0880B Casablanca AL-ITTIHAD AL-ISHTIRAKI in Arabic 23 May 92 p 4

[Statement by ANWAL Editor in Chief: "Restrictions on Freedoms Under Section 55 Affect Progressive Press Only"—first paragraph is AL-ITTIHAD AL-ISHTIRAKI introduction]

[Text] As everyone knows, the newspaper ANWAL in turn has been tried under Section 55. In his statement when questioned before the court, the newspaper's editor in chief, Mr. Hocine Kaouar, raised the issue of Section 55 and its role. We include in this report excerpts from Hocine Kaouar's statement related to this matter.

I do not believe the law can give with its right hand and take away with its left. This applies to the attempt to use Section 55 to restrict freedom of the press. I further state that in recent years Moroccan courts have seen many press-related cases in which various nationalist newspapers such as AL-ITTIHAD AL-ISHTIRAKI, AL-MASAR, AL-'ALAM, and others have been prosecuted. They were charged with libel and defamation and with having published everything that circulated in the sessions of these courts without having the Information Ministry wield the hateful sword of censorship embodied in the use of Section 55. Yet what is even worse is that the official and semiofficial information media did not hesitate to publish transcripts of sessions even before the persons involved were brought to trial, transcripts containing adjectives and matters that could be described as defamatory of militants and citizens. These media allowed themselves to publish this information and these articles and to publish epithets against militants and citizens who were victims of repression. They described these people as "rabble," "riffraff," and "camera victims"—things that the people will never forget.

As part of the check on the media, the authorities are trying to restrict freedom of the press. At the same time, they are giving their pallid press full freedom to publish whatever it wants, whenever it wants. As an indication of this, we at the newspaper ANWAL, as well as AL-ITTIHAD AL-ISHTIRAKI, now are being tried under Section 55 for the same cases that were published by all these newspapers and by all the information media on television, over the radio, and in the official and semi-official newspapers. What is permitted for some is forbidden for others!

The attempted restriction of freedoms under Section 55 is being imposed only on the progressive national press.

In reality, as I said at the beginning, either the law is applied to all equally, or the law will be no law, but only the law of the jungle.

TUNISIA

Background on al-Nahdah Demise

92AF0901A London AL MAJALLAH in Arabic
19, 20 May 92

[Article by Salah-al-Din al-Jurashi: "Al-Nahdah Commits Strategic Error"]

[19 May pp 38-39]

[Text] With the coming of 22 May 1992, a year will have passed since the Tunisian minister of interior announced the discovery by security agencies of "the al-Nahdah Movement's plot to revolt against the government." In his press conference, he said that the movement had devised a five-stage plan for that purpose, and that it had already begun to prepare for the final stage, one in which military elements would play the decisive role.

Tunisian public opinion is currently being prepared for the accused persons' trial, in essence a political [opposition] trial expected ever since November 1987, the date that President Zine El Abedine Ben Ali assumed the reins of power. Some informed sources indicate that the trial will involve 300 accused persons, including a number of military personnel of various ranks.

The question being frequently asked by observers, including those concerned with Tunisian affairs in general, and the Islamic Movement in particular, revolves around the real reasons that led to al-Nahdah's unexpectedly rapid "evaporation" in the field. Everyone—including officials—thought that the uprooting of the movement's structure would be more difficult, require a long period of time, and have direct political repercussions, as happened in 1987 during the confrontation with former president, Habib Bourguiba.

In this first part of a series, we will attempt to assess the development of relations between al-Nahdah and the government since the first days of the new regime, and highlight the strategic error that the movement committed. It was because of that mistake that both sides found themselves in a state of mistrust and confrontation.

A journalist told Hedi Baccouche, in the latter's capacity as prime minister, that on his own initiative he would go to London to contact the expatriate leaders of the Islamic Movement in an effort to normalize relations between the movement and the government. The journalist asked if the prime minister had a verbal message he wished conveyed. The prime minister was wary, as usual; nevertheless, he gave the journalist information, some of which was later reported to the public, about the Islamic Movement's security group. At that time, this information constituted a shock to Tunisian political circles.

This security group, which was composed of military and security elements, and which called itself "the National Salvation Group," was prepared to carry out a coup against the former president, Habib Bourguiba. The group had set 8 November 1987 as the date of implementation. The countdown began, but it was surprised by the initiative of 7 November. After only a few days, security agencies—in the new regime—were able to identify the group and began to arrest its most prominent members.

The general thrust of Baccouche's verbal message—through the journalist—was that the government, despite its concern over the existing relations between the movement and "the group," did not intend to accuse the movement. It was content with calling to account the arrested elements, without referring to their political identity. In effect, President Ben Ali had decided to deal with the movement politically and not on grounds of national security.

Dispute

The journalist flew to London and, from there, to Paris and Geneva. There were two weeks of heated discussions and intense disagreement, centering around the political and organizational arms of the Islamic Movement (currently the al-Nahdah Movement). One section expressed considerable enthusiasm for cooperation with the government and responded positively to President Ben Ali's initiatives, appreciating his courage in removing Bourguiba (the Islamists' historic foe). By contrast, there was another wing, known as the "Paris Group" and noted for its cautious positions, which raised doubts and demanded several guarantees.

A similar debate was going on inside prisons in Tunisia. Everyone there awaited word on Rachid Ghannouchi's position, who had gained additional legitimacy from Bourguiba's prosecution. When the journalist returned from Europe, bearing a message signed by Abdelfattah Mourou (the number two man in the movement), he delivered it to Dr. Hamouda Ben Slama—before he took over the ministry—who gave it to the president. The government [then] signaled the course it intended to take by releasing Ghannouchi, the movement's leader, contrary to its usual custom.

Two reasons summarize the motive behind that:

1. A personal appraisal of Ghannouchi by the president. Ghannouchi was reassuring to the president, as opposed to the rest of the movement's followers. President Ben Ali still recounts that, when he was minister of interior, he clashed with President Bourguiba over two questions: the first, when Bourguiba ordered the Tunisian League for Defense of Human Rights dissolved; and the second, when Ben Ali opposed the decision to execute Ghannouchi.

2. The influence that Ghannouchi enjoys within his movement. This empowers him to okay any agreement reached during negotiations.

Mutual Trust Stage

Ghannouchi supported Mourou's initiative and, in his first statement after his release from prison, he said: "Our trust in God, and in President Ben Ali, is considerable." Following that, actions were taken to release the prisoners, until not one single prisoner remained in detention. Therefore, al-Nahdah's relations with the new regime were distinguished by relative mutual trust for two years. Reassuring words surfaced from both sides concerning cooperation and stability. In this climate, positive indicators continued to appear to such a degree that those circles opposed to Islamists became uneasy. These are the circles that are in constant fear of the Sudanese scenario, a reference to the days of the Muslim Brotherhood's alliance with former president Ja'afar al-Numayri.

On the government's side, it had adopted an important number of measures within the context of what was officially called the return of conciliation between the state and religion, or the reconsideration of Tunisia's Arab, Islamic identity. It broadcast the call to prayer over radio and television, reopened Zituna University, subsidized the Supreme Islamic Council, restored the office of secretary of state for religious affairs, and used sighting the crescent moon as the means to begin the month of Ramadan and announce 'Id al-Fitr.

These might be normal matters in any Islamic country but, in comparison with Bourguiba's way of thinking and method of dealing with religious problems, these decisions were considered an important shift in the history of the Tunisian regime. In addition, the movement shared in the drafting of the National Charter, and a presidential advisor was tasked with a portfolio to deal with it officially. The movement was also allowed to publish a newspaper as its official organ.

With regard to granting a license and legal recognition to the al-Nahdah Party, the regime hesitated considerably before taking this step. President Ben Ali stressed to more than one national figure that he was still studying the matter and that he would not object, if certain conditions were fulfilled.

Fearful of the movement's religious nature, two laws were issued that paralleled one another: the Law of Mosques, which strengthened the administration's supervision over mosque affairs; and, the Law of Political Parties, which prohibited the recognition of parties based on religion.

Meanwhile, the movement continued its internal debate in order to:

- consolidate its new position vis-a-vis the government;
- adjust to the requirements of this relationship; i.e., make party politics conform to the government's terms, at least in regard to aspects of form, such as vernacular;

—separate the security group from any identification with the movement; and —adopt positive positions, such as criticizing violence, not dealing with foreign elements, and attesting to the validity of the personal status code, certain articles of which the movement was suspected of trying to change. In short, the movement adopted everything necessary to support its leadership in embarking upon a conciliatory relationship with the new regime.

Elections, and Reversed Positions

Matters continued in this vein, despite the fact that personal accounts had not been settled. Differences occurred between the movement and those who were officially charged with administering the dialogue, until the start of preparations for the legislative election, which were held on 2 April 1989.

The government came forth with certain proposals which would allow opposition parties a relative participation in Parliament, yet protect the continuation of constitutional institutions and guard against a sudden change in the balance of power. The first proposal called for holding broad, interim elections, which would be tantamount to an opinion poll, in light of which amendments could be introduced to the electoral code. When the Movement of Socialist Democrats rejected this proposal and demanded general, comprehensive elections, the government proposed forming an election front to include all parties that were signatories to the National Charter.

Despite the dispute that split the al-Nahdah Movement, it was their intent to accept the formula and participate within the front. When the political parties met with the prime minister, the al-Nahdah representative was surprised by the position of Ahmed Moustiri, who rejected the formula of the front, preferring that his party participate in the elections on its own. Therefore, the agreement was broken, and it was clear that the political situation was headed toward a severe crisis.

At this point, a major, unexpected change occurred in al-Nahdah's policy. After having accepted the principle of non-participation in the elections and, not having voiced opposition to the slate of the Destouri Democratic Group, in exchange for recognition of al-Nahdah, it unexpectedly decided to participate through [independent] slates. It then jumped from mere token participation in certain districts, to offering election slates in all districts, in order to be the sole competition for the ruling party on both the local and national levels. Instead of a formal presence in various districts, al-Nahdah's rank and file burst forth in a maximum mobilization effort, recruiting thousands of followers and supporters to such a degree that official quarters became disturbed. They found themselves forced to use all their capabilities and resources to confront this sudden reversal in al-Nahdah's policy.

Instead of the candidates being bound by a moderate and reassuring electoral and political message, most of them

became embroiled in diatribes which, in essence, were incompatible with statements made by al-Nahdah's leaders, and with the principles by which the movement was bound when it signed the National Charter, especially regarding equality and human rights. This was what prompted political circles to express their fears and opposition to al-Nahdah's "social agenda," accusing it once again of duplicity. Then the elections were held, and the "al-Nahdahists" mobilized to monitor the vote-counting operations. Despite the fact that the official results showed them to be the second political force in the country, confirmed by the fact that they had obtained 17 percent of the total vote, al-Nahdah's post-election commentary was the most violently anti-government statement of all the other parties. That was how the rupture occurred. The causes for confrontation gathered and escalated.

Every analysis of the deterioration of relations between the government and al-Nahdah points to that strategic error, made by al-Nahdah's leadership under the spell of their electoral victories. However, they acted rashly, and in such a manner as to frighten the government and alarm the political elite. The leadership shifted—in a single bound—from a political faction discussing legal recognition and occupying a few seats in Parliament to one playing the role of a pressure group and pivotal force, not content with just leading the opposition. Quite in contrast, al-Nahdah saw itself with the capability and legitimacy to say that it not only had the majority in the Chamber of Deputies, but that it also deserved to replace the revolution of 7 November [i.e., the administration of Ben 'Ali]. Al-Nahdah made these boasts in utter disregard of the fact that the election game is a two-edged sword. The movement was not easy to deal with. In no time, it had forgotten itself and had disregarded the nature of its position, the fragility of its framework. Its rank and file became caught up in the tendencies and incendiary nature of the times. Control of the government came into view, like a fruit ready to be plucked.

Since that time, the balance has been upset. Like a ship with two competing captains, relations between al-Nahdah and the government rapidly deteriorated from trust and caution to apprehensiveness and a feeling of danger. Open warfare for legitimacy broke out.

Less than three years later, the Salvation Front in Algeria repeated the same mistake. Even though it was by a broader method and in a different political context, the result was the same: the spread of chaos from the complications of sudden changes in the balance of power, and the perception of others that the ship had to have only one captain.

[20 May p 32]

[Text] With the announcement of the 2 April 1988 [sic] election results, and the ruling party's sweep of all seats in the Chamber of Deputies, unfriendly relations developed between the government and the rest of the opposition political parties, including a section of intellectuals

who had no party affiliation. A few weeks after the election, Rached Ghannouchi, the leader of the al-Nahdah Movement, left the country in a normal manner, not knowing that he would spend many years traveling from one country to another. The longer his migration lasted, the less informed he was with regard to events on the Tunisian scene and their circumstantial and secret ramifications. The politician, whose direct ties with the current events are cut, has a diminished ability to grasp the undercurrents and subtle developments of the situation. His imaginings are inflated, his errors compounded, and his calculations faulty.

From early on, the security apparatus began to gather data and to analyze the way in which the al-Nahdah Movement organized its election campaign. They began to monitor the movements of certain elements who habitually worked covertly. Among those elements that were detained were some who had been—or still were—in the army or agencies of the Ministry of Interior.

Ghannouchi believed that confrontation had become inevitable. Without any preamble, in a private session with Maghrebi workers and emigres in Paris, he embarked upon diatribe against the Tunisian president himself. Many of those who heard him considered this to be a political mistake because such political rhetoric could only lock him into a stalemate and prevent a resumption of the dialogue which was still a likely possibility, no matter how critical relations had become among political factions. This surprised and confused the movement's leaders inside the country. They considered the statement of al-Nahdah's leader to be unnecessary.

At this point, the Gulf crisis erupted. At the outset, al-Nahdah issued a statement that was considered moderate. Later, Hamadi al-Jebali, the editor of al-Nahdah's mouthpiece, AL-FAJR, issued a statement attacking Saddam Husayn. He said that Saddam would bring about his country's destruction, and that he believed that the Gulf states had the right to seek assistance from the coalition nations.

Suddenly, Ghannouchi issued his infamous statement attacking the Gulf states. He alleged that the conflict existed between "the oppressed and the oppressors, regionally and internationally." The result was the collapse of the bridges with the Gulf states, the uneasiness of Western capitals, and the party's loss of international support. It also highlighted the internal differences over the extent of party commitment to Ghannouchi's positions and statements. For example, Abdelfattah Mourou, the movement's number two man, stated that Ghannouchi was no longer the leader of al-Nahdah. People spoke of a vacancy in the leadership.

Final Attempt

Before the shutdown of party operations and the arrest of its leadership, the chairman of the Arab Institute for Human Rights, Hasib Ben 'Umar, an independent, national figure who enjoyed the respect of all sides, tried

to resolve this discord, or at least, keep matters from deteriorating. To this end, he received an audience with the president, and his efforts would have achieved some of the goals, had it not been for an internal dispute within the upper echelons of the al-Nahdah movement. The intransigent wing won out and set forth two conditions: direct dialogue with the president and recognition of the al-Nahdah Movement. When violent disturbances broke out in certain suburbs of Tunis, the man [Hasib Ben 'Umar?] decided to suspend his initiative, to give way to stepped up political and field operations. Tension reached its high point when the headquarters of the Destouri Democratic Group in Bab Suwayyah was attacked, resulting in a guard's death.

This incident had a profound effect upon the movement, dealing it a significant political and popular setback. Public opinion condemned it. Some leaders suspended their party memberships (Mourou's initiative) and other Tunisian political parties distanced themselves from it. The positions taken by [government] leaders clearly went too far, justified by the saying: "Violence begets violence." The government purged the hierarchy of the Tunisian General Student Federation, which was considered one of the movement's assets under the new regime, and struck at Islamic Tendency locations, a organization which constituted al-Nahdah's strike force.

Again there was talk about the movement's security or military wing. This is a complex and dangerous matter which has not been settled domestically. Organizational dualism is a mistake which many Islamic movements inherited from the Muslim Brotherhood in the forties. All experience has shown that it is politically, ideologically, and strategically precarious.

Reasons for Collapse

The policy of pruning away continued until all signs of resistance in its various forms had disappeared. In that way, the "security plan" achieved its goals but, at the same time, left unanswered questions about the principal factors contributing to the elimination of the movement across the country and to the rapid demise of its organization on the Tunisian political scene. There were eight reasons that can be listed in this context.

1. The cat and mouse game played by security agencies. This narrowed the parameters of al-Nahdah's organizational maneuvers, making it miss the opportunity to mobilize and facilitating the arrest of its leaders, in contrast to the events of 1987. The security agencies found complete data on al-Nahdah's organizational structure in the records of the legislative elections.
2. The roundup of party leaders on record in the field. This confused the rank and file members and forced them to accept a kind of decentralized, provincial organization.
3. The early arrest of some pro-movement security personnel. This weakened the organization's intelligence

system and limited its sources of information. These blows fell in rapid and painful succession.

4. The absence of foreign support. This had an effective impact domestically.

5. The erroneous estimate of the regime's power and ability to remain steadfast in confronting al-Nahdah. Some of the movement's leaders thought that the regime was isolated. They expected that it would back off and attempt to avoid a clash because of domestic and foreign considerations, that it would be threatened with rapid asphyxiation if the al-Nahdahists returned to prison or, perhaps, that the government might resort to declaring a state of emergency which would then expose its domestic contradictions. It is certain that the model of the 1987 confrontation formed a reference point for many of the movement's members. However, the dissimilarities between that event and this one were fundamental.

6. The reversal of the Algerian contest. Because al-Nahdah had placed its full confidence in the Algerian democratic experiment, its estimate was that matters there—in a worst-case scenario—would lead to the Islamists sharing in power. Al-Nahdah thought it possible that Algeria could be used as a permanent base for political pressure. This explains Ghannouchi's thinking with regard to using it as his headquarters, and why many of the movement's leaders took refuge there.

Algerian political party newspapers and Islamic movements defended al-Nahdah and intensified political attacks against the Tunisian regime. This clearly affected bilateral relations between the two countries. However, unexpectedly, the situation turned upside down. It became clear that the leadership of the Salvation Front was not just playing with its own fate, and the fate of Algeria, but also with the destiny of Ghannouchi and his movement.

7. The disparity between the accounts of the Tunisian political parties and al-Nahdah's accounts. In contrast to 1987 when the interests of everyone converged to remove the old regime, this time the goals and values of the two sides diverged. The recognized political parties chose to support the government in its battle against al-Nahdah, either openly or tacitly. Although they had reservations about certain methods, they did not stand with Ghannouchi, as they had done in the last months of Bourguiba's regime.

8. The masses' refusal to offer any overt assistance to the various al-Nahdah initiatives, despite repeated pleas in this regard. The last of these pleas was an appeal from Algeria, calling for "civil disobedience." It was an appeal that clearly how jolted al-Nahdah's leaders were when they saw that the masses had abandoned them at the crucial moment.

It is well-known that the masses that participate in elections are not the masses of confrontations. Nevertheless, because the movement was able to garner at least 300,000 votes in the 1989 elections, some of its leaders

mistakenly thought it would be possible to exploit this human asset, or at least part of it, in their policies of escalation.

No Street, No University

Consequently, al-Nahdah disappeared from the street and from the university. It is no longer a participating power in the country, at least for now. However, that does not prevent its spirit from surviving and lurking. The question is still pending about its future size and role. Observers also agree that the battle that occurred left negative effects that will have repercussions for some time on the government's relations with political parties, and on its relations with the Tunisian League for Defense of Human Rights at home, and international organizations concerned with the field of human rights abroad.

Politicians and intellectuals in Tunisia are still discussing the need to overcome the crisis' complications and return to laying a foundation for a long-term concept, based on dialogue and treatment of issues politically, comprehensively, and integrally. Some of them consider the "Islamic situation" to be the most complex issue, and an issue whose causes and justifications transcend the political arena, as well as the boundaries of Tunisia.

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

Air Force Commander Discusses Prep School

92AE04374 Al-Sharīqah AL-KHALIJ in Arabic
16 May 92 p 3

[Article by Mahjub Musa: "Opening of UAE's First Air Secondary School; Accepts Graduates of Preparatory Schools to Qualify for Air College as Pilot Candidates"]

[Text] In implementation of the directives of Shaykh Zayid bin Sultan Al Nuhayyan, the president of the United Arab Emirates [UAE], the first air secondary school will begin to accept its initial batch of students on 1 September 1992. The school's first academic year will begin with the enrollment of 120 students.

This announcement was made by Brigadier General (Staff) Rashid Mubarak al-Riyami, commander of the Air Force and the Air Defense Forces, in a press conference held in the headquarters of the magazine AL-QUWWAT AL-JAWIYAH. The conference was attended by Air Lieutenant Colonel Sa'id Muhammad Shahin al-Mamarr, the commander of the Air College, who said that the goal of establishing this school was to qualify some of the nation's preparatory school graduates, both educationally and technically, over a three year period. This would include military and air preparation and training commensurate with their ages, in order to matriculate them into the Air College as pilot candidates, after they have obtained the general secondary "scientific department" diploma.

Curricula

The commander of the Air Force and the Air Defense Forces stated that the three-year study period is divided into three academic sessions, during which the student will complete 40 hours of flying.

The school makes the student the basic pivotal point for its system of instruction, and strives to fulfill its students' individual educational needs. The school believes that each student has the right to obtain the best possible education, in order to enable him to grow and develop his personal capabilities. Moreover, the school is committed to help its students reach the highest levels of success. With regard to student distribution, the number of students in each section will not exceed 15, which gives them the opportunity to receive individual attention from the instructor. Furthermore, the curricula was formulated by the best academic and educational experts.

Brig. Gen. al-Riyami explained that the school would teach the Ministry of Education's curricula as pertains to Islamic training, Arabic, mathematics, physics, chemistry, biology, geology, history, geography, computer science, and English. Additional material will include military science, as well as preparing a complete program commensurate with the student's physical, mental, and psychological abilities. This will help prepare the student for military life. The student will continue to advance gradually through the program until he matriculates as a pilot candidate in the Air College. With regard to aviation sciences, the students will begin to study a simple introduction to aeronautics, commensurate with their age level, in which they will concentrate on the practical side.

Practical Aviation

Brig. Gen. al-Riyami said that practical aviation is given in the second and third years, after the student has matured mentally, physically, and psychologically, and has absorbed a sufficient amount of information. The training is on light aircraft, using the best qualified pilots, both in terms of pursuing this skill and in dealing with young men of this age. This will entail 40 hours of flying time for each student during the last two years of school and, when completed, the student will be given an internationally recognized private pilot's license.

Brig Gen al-Riyami stated that those who are unsuited, or who do not wish to continue to learn how to fly, can continue to study in the school, preparing to join one of the other branches of the Air and Air Defense Forces, so that they will have an opportunity to complete their university or technical training, either within the country or abroad.

He pointed out that the long summer to come would be used to organize an intensive course in English, in order to raise the student's level and qualify him for the Air College. This will be done through concentration on scientific aviation terminology, since a special program has been prepared to

qualify the student to obtain the Cambridge International Certificate in English, which is recognized by all world universities and institutes.

He added that the teaching philosophy is based on concentrating on the practical side of instruction, through increasing practical and laboratory experiences, and following modern teaching methods. The self-instructional method "CBT" will be introduced by means of computer. It enables the student to retrieve the data he wants at any time and for as many times as he wishes.

Conditions for Matriculation

Regarding matriculation terms, Brig Gen al-Riyami said that they are no different from any UAE educational institute or academy. One must be a UAE citizen, have successfully obtained the third-level preparatory certificate, be medically fit, and have a record of good conduct and behavior.

During the academic period, the student is given a financial stipend and two days leave at the end of each week. The student will be provided with food and uniforms on levels appropriate for a student who is to be a future pilot. In addition, he is given tools, books, and paper at no charge.

Brig. Gen. al-Riyami said that the school's permanent headquarters will be in the city of al-'Ayn. The school will be moved there from its temporary headquarters near the Air College within three years. He added: "We are planning to have 340 to 360 students within the first three years."

Cooperation and Harmony

Lt. Col. (Pilot) Sa'id Shahin al-Mamarr, commander of the Air College, said during the press conference that he would be taking advantage of the Ministry of Education's expertise. "We have considerable, tangible cooperation with the ministry, such as using its expertise in teaching methods, giving examinations, and preparing study lessons and curricula. The ministry also has arranged for counterpart teachers from Arab and other countries to visit, in order to impart their experiences and expertise and to gain from them the information that is appropriate for students in the UAE."

He said that the students would be free to go to any other place to continue their studies, after the secondary school. He added that, in consideration of the age of this group of young men, they will be assured of good care and will be provided with transportation to take them to and from their homes each weekend.

In spite of the fact that life at school will be mostly serious and attentive work, there will be other factors taken into consideration, in order to help the students grow mentally and culturally through educational, recreational, and athletic means, so as to develop their different identities. Contracts have been made with skilled instructors and

trainers, so that each student will obtain the best instructional care to raise his educational level, in order that he may compete with his peers in other secondary schools.

The nature of the student in secondary school has also been taken into account and, accordingly, well-qualified supervisors have been appointed to administer the school.

AFGHANISTAN

General Dostam Discusses Minorities, Regions

92AS1211A London AL-WASAT in Arabic
29 Jun 92 pp 22-23

[Article by Ahmad Muwaffaq Zaydan]

[Text] Northern Afghanistan—Gen. Abdorrashid Dostam, leader of the Uzbek militia, appears to be a "stumblingblock" in the current political conflict in Afghanistan. He has allied himself with Ahmad Shah Mas'ud, "field commander" of the Jam'iyat-e Eslami which is led by Burhanuddin Rabbani and aims at taking control of Kabul in order to pave the way for the mojahedin's entry into the capital and their assumption of power, with Sebghatollah Mojaddedi assuming the presidency of the Transitional Assembly. This step has won him the enmity of Golboddin Hikmatyar, leader of the Islamic Party, who called for ousting Dostam's militia from Kabul. Otherwise, he threatened, he will not participate in the government and, instead, declare war on the new regime. As a result, Mas'ud and Hikmatyar held a meeting, and reportedly agreed on a certain plan to oust Dostam's militia from Kabul. But Dostam sees himself and his role differently. He considers himself to have played the leading role in bringing down former Afghan president Najibullah when he turned against him after he had served him and worked with him. He considers his role principal in liberating Kabul.

Who is Dostam? How does he think? What are his plans? Does he really want to partition Afghanistan, as Hikmatyar and his supporters accuse him of wanting to do? What is the source of his power? AL-WASAT correspondent visited northern Afghanistan and spent three days there. He met Gen. Dostam, interviewed him, and sent the following report:

Is Gen. Abdurrashid Dostam, commander of the Uzbek militia, and leader of the Islamic Nationalist Movement that includes various mojahedin factions, seeking to separate northern Afghanistan, particularly Mazar-e Sharif and Jowzjan, among Dostam's principal bastions, from the rest of the country, and keep these regions for himself?

The visitor to northern Afghanistan and the Uzbek areas comes out with the impression that this country is a "nation at war." Many militia recruits are no older than 12 years. Explaining the situation to AL-WASAT, Gen. Dostam said: "I worked for six years to win Najibullah's confidence and to acquire sophisticated weapons. I have, in fact, achieved this objective and therefore was able to overthrow Najibullah, something that all the mojahedin were unable to achieve."

Dostam is not more than 38 years old. He dropped out of school in the sixth grade. But he is man seasoned in war and battle. His militia forces proved their combat ability in several battles. In fact, they were the principal forces on which the former regime relied following the Soviet

forces's withdrawal from Afghanistan in February 1989, until the downfall of Najibullah, particularly after the Afghan army became splintered and its loyalties divided.

Dostam seems to be proud of his achievements, and one senses this from his saying: "Hadrat [honorific title]—reference to Mojaddedi—called me the great mojahed, and Rabbani called me God's sword." But he appears to be poorly educated, for during the course of our conversation I mentioned Syria. "Is Syria an Arab country?" he asked me.

"How I Overthrew Najibullah"

Dostam related to AL-WASAT how he turned against Najibullah and toppled him. He said: "At the beginning we were four generals. We decided to disobey Najibullah's orders and we declared that we would stand against him. Three months before his downfall, we sat down in order to coordinate things between us. I had this idea on my mind for six years, but I was able to implement it until just three months before Najibullah's downfall. The generals who were with me were Gen. Ghaffar Men Barwan, Gen. Rasul Pahlewan, and Gen. 'Asameddin, commander of the 18th division. We sat together in Rasul Pahlewan's house in Mazar-e Sharif and decided to begin military preparations against Najibullah."

[Zaydan] Were the mojahedin aware of this plan?

[Dostam] At this meeting we decided to broach the subject with the mojahedin after having taken the decision to topple Najibullah. We sent messages to Gen. Nasim Mahdi, a leader of the Islamic Party (led by Hikmatyar) in the north; Mowlawi 'Abadi, a party member; and commander Ahmad Shah Mas'ud. They all supported us, including Mas'ud. At the beginning we seized Jowzjan province, Sar-e Pol, and Faryab, and we freed all the detainees.

[Zaydan] Did you contact Hikmatyar before contacting Mas'ud?

[Dostam] We had no contact with him. When I was in Balkh we received a message from Hikmatyar. (Dostam produced Hikmatyar's message in Farsi).

[Zaydan] Are you willing to accept Hikmatyar as prime minister?

[Dostam] Yes, I am prepared to obey his orders as prime minister, if the Afghan people accept him and if he is prepared to understand the deprived minorities' rights.

[Zaydan] How can you judge that Mojaddedi, or Hikmatyar, or even Dostam are acceptable to the Afghan people?

[Dostam] Through elections.

[Zaydan] What do you mean by deprived minorities' rights?

[Dostam] There are at least 6.5 million Azeris, Turkmen, Uzbeks, and Arabs in Afghanistan. They must be allotted

ministries and parliamentary seats in proportion to their numbers. The Uzbek militia possesses large quantities of arms and ammunition. I have personally counted 50 fighter planes at Mazar-e Sharif airfield and 28 helicopters at another base.

One can hardly enter a military barracks or visit a military unit where there is no talk about promotions. This is of interest to both soldiers and officers. A general told AL-WASAT that during Najibullah's era there was only one general, namely Dostam. But in a few days' time Dostam promoted scores of generals and other officers, since promotion brings an increase to an officer's pay. A regular soldier's pay in the militia ranges between 15,000 Afghan rupees and 50,000 rupees, which is a big salary in Afghanistan. This is not to mention the pay of generals and officers, particularly in view of the fact that a minister's pay in Afghanistan is 50,000 rupees.

This situation prompted me to ask Gen. Dostam about the sources of funding for his army which, according to him, is 150,000 strong and equipped with sophisticated weapons. Gen. Dostam replied: "Support comes from God and from my people." But when I told the general that an individual's income in Afghanistan does not match the military pay, and pointed out that I heard in Kabul that a Turkish delegation twice visited Mazar-e Sharif during the past 10 months and offered him generous aid, he denied this.

It appears that the militias are in possession of the equipment that print Afghan currency. They also receive foreign aid.

The Partitioning of Afghanistan

The discussion then moved to what has been said about Mas'ud and Hikmatyar agreeing on the eviction of his militia from Kabul. I asked him:

[Zaydan] What is your comment on the agreement between Mas'ud and Hikmatyar to oust your forces from of Kabul?

[Dostam] Kabul is the common home for all Afghans, and not just for Hikmatyar or Mas'ud. But if they do not want me in Kabul, then I do not want them there too.

[Zaydan] What would your answer be if Mas'ud asked you to get out of Kabul?

[Dostam] When peace returns to Kabul and Mas'ud asks me to do so and the Consultative Council of the National Islamic Movement endorses that, then we will get out. The downfall of Najibullah came at the hands of our forces. Such action must be received with appreciation and gratitude and not with insults.

[Zaydan] When, in your view, will peace return to Afghanistan?

[Dostam] The return of peace depends on when the senior leaders will give the Afghan people their rights.

[Zaydan] We understand from what you say that you do not take your orders from commander Mas'ud.

[Dostam] My forces in Kabul are under Mas'ud's command, the present defense minister and the one in charge of security in the capital.

[Zaydan] What will you do should Hikmatyar and Mas'ud decide to expel you from Kabul by force?

[Dostam] I don't think Mas'ud will do that.

[Zaydan] So you will not get out of Kabul?

[Dostam] Hikmatyar keeps saying that Dostam wants to partition Afghanistan, but my stay in Kabul has proved that I do not want partitioning. If they want to force me to leave Kabul, the Afghan people then will not accept orders from the central government.

[Zaydan] Will you, in this case, declare a state in northern Afghanistan?

[Dostam] I will stay in the north. Where will I go otherwise?

[Zaydan] Will you declare a state in the full sense of the word?

[Dostam] If Kabul does not accept me, then I will not accept it.

At this point Dostam suggested the establishment of a federal regime in Afghanistan. He told AL-WASAT "I demand the division of Afghanistan into five regions." He believes that this federation system could be similar to that of the United States and Pakistan.

[Zaydan] Are you sorry for the downfall of Najibullah, particularly since you worked with him for many years?

[Dostam] I am sorry because I did not arrest him. I wanted to bring him to the north in order to show him on television.

[Zaydan] Why?

[Dostam] Because he kept accusing me of wanting to partition Afghanistan and that I am against the Pushtun. I wanted him to appear on television in order to respond to all these false charges.

[Zaydan] But your forces were in the airport and they were the ones that arrested him.

[Dostam] It wasn't my forces that captured Najibullah. It was the Republican Guard forces that brought him back from the airport road to the city. After that he disappeared and up to this day we have been unable to arrest him.

NEPAL

Local Election Results Summarized, Analyzed

Final Results Released

92AS1159A Kathmandu *THE RISING NEPAL*
in English 10 Jun 92 pp 1, 7

[Text] Kathmandu, June 9—The ruling Nepali Congress [NC] has won 22 mayoral seats, 21 deputy mayoral positions and 288 municipal seats in last month's local elections as the Election Commission announced the final results of 36 municipalities. The Opposition, Communist Party of Nepal (Unified Marxist-Leninist) [CPN-UML], won six mayoral and five deputy mayoral posts and 108 members. Their overall position in the municipalities is: Nepali Congress 331 (56 percent) and CPN (UML) 119 (20 percent).

In the village development committees, results for 42,413 positions have been received so far. Of them 21,461 positions went to the Nepali Congress and 11,175 to the CPN (UML).

The United People's Front Nepal (UPFN) has been routed in all municipalities winning only one deputy mayoral and seven members while Nepal Sadbhavana party [NSP] performed better than the UPFN winning one mayoral, three deputy mayoral and 14 member seats in municipalities.

Rastriya Prajatantra Party [RPP] won two mayoral, an equal number of deputy mayoral and 51 municipal seats.

Of the election results to 593 municipal seats, RPP got 55, NSP 18, UPFN 8 and independents 62. There was no nomination filed to one municipal seat in Dipayal which will have to be filled up through by-elections later. Independents have won five mayoral, four deputy mayoral and 53 members.

In the villages, RPP has got 4,020 seats, NSP won 1,272 seats and UPFN 2,202 while the independents bagged 2,283.

[Party Positions]

Final Party Position in Municipalities

NC	331
UML	119
RPP	55
NSP	18
UPFN	8
Ind.	62

Latest Party Position in Village Development Committees

NC	21,461
UML	11,175
RPP	4,020
NSP	1,272
UPFN	2,202
Ind.	2,283

Results Received so far: 42,413

UML Alleges Rigging

92AS1159B Kathmandu *THE RISING NEPAL*
in English 10 Jun 92 p 3

[Text] Kathmandu, June 9 (RSS [Rastriya Samachar Samiti])—Chairman of the Communist Party of Nepal [CPN] (UML) [United Marxists and Leninists] and leader of the chief opposition party in the parliament Manamohan Adhikari has expressed the view that the results of local bodies elections have not caused any sign of defeatism in the leaders and workers of his party but, on the contrary, encouraged them.

Mr. Adhikari made these remarks at a press conference organised here Monday by the party's central election direction and supervision committee.

The ruling party had acted with the intention of winning the local bodies elections anyhow, he alleged.

Referring to the "untoward incidents" that took place in the course of the local units elections, he expressed the apprehension that democracy itself would be in peril if such trend continued unchecked.

He gave the assurance that his party would not enter into any kind of alliance with other party, contrary to political norms, for the sake of posts.

At the press meet, convener of the committee Chandra Prakash Mainali, MP member of Parliament, distributed a press statement, which accused the ruling party of rigging the local bodies elections and voiced the CPN-UML's opposition to such thing.

He said that despite some differences on electoral procedures his party had remained firm on holding the local units election this very year so as to strengthen the foundation of parliamentary democracy and enable the people to forge ahead on the path of social changes.

His party countered the incidents in various places in a democratic manner instead of using force during such happenings and it has no repentance on that account, he made it clear.

Also attached with the statement is a 13-point protest note.

Acceptance of Results Urged

92AS1159C Kathmandu THE RISING NEPAL
in English 7 Jun 92 p 4

[Article by P. Kharel: "In Black and White"]

[Excerpts] A pall of gloom loomed large over the Nepali Congress camp following the May 1991 general election results in Kathmandu Valley where the party performed pathetically, having won only two of the ten seats at stake. On the other hand, the heady mood of celebration in the Left, particularly the CPN(UML) [Communist Party of Nepal-United Marxists and Leninists], camp was only to be expected in marked contrast to the downright rude shock that the Rastriya Prajatantra Party [RPP] was met with. Things have reversed dramatically this time in the polls for local self-government. The ruling party seems to have done exceedingly well nationwide in terms of posts and seats won, especially in the municipalities. If the CPN (UML) had expected to make deep inroads into the Congress stronghold, it has failed. [passage omitted]

Considering that lots of problems and hardships of the people remain yet to be addressed, the electorate's verdict could have been more due to the lapses of the Opposition in general to raise the right issues with consistency and effective pursuance than any brilliant record on the part of the ruling party.

Contrary to suggestions that the local polls should be on non-party basis, the exercise last fortnight went off well. Lots of prestige were at stake. It is at times of exceedingly good performance or rock bottom showings that a political group is under severe test. Now that it has fared so satisfactorily, will the Congress take special care not to allow arrogance to creep into the organisation's functioning? By the same token, will the CPN (UML) react sportingly? The RPP's gradual rise upwards can be partly attributed to the virtual absence of the "mob fury" so persistently orchestrated in the general election campaigning. RPP members, it needs no over-emphasis, are almost wholly composed of ex-panchas. They will have to bear with the legacy, whether they like it or not—even if they join Nepali Congress, CPN (UML) or some other group.

The local polls over, the task now is to forge cooperation on all sides of the political spectrum. Failure to develop a spirit of consensus decisions and, wherever possible, mutual accommodations can result in a political paralysis in the workings of the local units, be it at the village/town level or the districts. Cooperating with rival political groups will be a bigger challenge for the parties than winning the elections.

Leftists Declining

92AS1159D Kathmandu THE RISING NEPAL
in English 9 Jun 92 p 4

[Article by Mukti Rijal: "Local Elections: Time for Soul-Searching"]

[Text] Their poor show in the local elections has driven the leftists to contemplate self-introspection. Although there has been no communique or comment credited to any of the leftist groups so far, individual opinions and reactions from the leftist leaders published in the vernacular weeklies provide a glimpse of mood in the leftist circles following their below-expectation performance in the local polls.

Division of the Left

Many left votaries have blamed the divisions among the leftist ranks for the debacle in the local elections. However, the reactions from the circles allying with the CPN (UML) [Communist Party of Nepal-United Marxists and Leninists] tend to hold their over-confidence and poor campaigning responsible for the defeat in Kathmandu and Lalitpur municipalities.

"Drishti" columnist and noted political commentator Raghu Pant has accounted for the reasons of defeat in the capital city. One of the primary reasons, according to Mr. Pant, for the defeat has been the confusion and uncertainty resulted from the efforts invested in forging an electoral pact and understanding with the Unity Centre.

The failed negotiations that was prolonged for many days to conclude sent a very disappointing signal to the voters as a consequence of which they thought it better to side with the Nepali Congress [NC]. However, Mr. Pant terms the parting of ways between CPN (UML) and Unity Centre which resulted in the latter's very impoverished show and drubbing as a surgical operation on the goitre developed in the throat of the CPN (UML).

He has compared the Unity Centre with the "malignant goitre" developed in the throat of the CPN (UML) for which operation was necessary. And the local elections did very well to provide relief to the CPN (UML) painlessly.

Despite this terse and metaphorical attack on the Unity Centre launched by Mr. Pant, the author of talks who laboured for bringing the two powerful left groups together but failed Mr. Padma Ratna Tuladhar has held the left division and its impact on the voters responsible for defeat in the Kathmandu municipality.

The reaction that comes from the convenor of Samyukta Jana Morcha—an offshoot of the Unity Centre—Dr. Babu Ram Bhattarai following the drubbing in the elections is interesting. The reaction credited to him published in a weekly close to the Nepal Labour and Peasants Party (NLPP) has it that the leftists could not become successful to defeat the bourgeoisie through electoral strategy.

Dr. Bhattarai's reaction adds: "It was folly on the part of CPN (UML) to dream of outvoting the bourgeoisie in the local elections." What Dr. Bhattarai's reaction implies is that the communists can take power only through the armed insurrection but not through the electoral exercise.

Dr. Bhattarai's premise of armed struggle as the correct path for communists cannot escape criticism about its viability and legitimacy in the present national and global context. Furthermore, it can be termed as Dr. Bhattarai's face saving justification for drubbing the Samyukta Jana Morcha faced in the Kathmandu and Lalitpur municipality elections.

However, it cannot be contested that the course of elections is difficult to manage with poor resources and weaker organisational clout. But as far as the case of local elections is concerned no party should count on the slogan mongering and emotional outbursts.

The success of an agitation and stir should not be construed as the prospects for popular backing at the hustings. Whatever the reasons the successes of strikes and closure launched at the call of the Unity Centre was misread and misinterpreted as its increasing influence at the expense of Nepali Congress and CPN (UML).

This emboldened the Unity Centre to make tough bargaining with CPN (UML) for getting a fair size of seats at the municipality elections. But the CPN (UML) resisted it and went alone in the elections. However, in the case of Kathmandu municipality it was not possible for the leftists to garner victory even as they had united through mutual adjustment.

The leading votes the NC candidates took for the elections in Kathmandu municipality to clinch easy victory was so big that the combined leftist candidates could not have made it. However, in case of the deputy mayoral post the fight between NC's Joshi and UML's Sthapit was close and really competitive. That Mr. Joshi ripped Mr. Sthapit shows that the Kathmandu municipality voters favoured the Nepali Congress in place of leftists this time.

Another important headway the Nepali Congress made in the Lalitpur municipality by grabbing majority of

seats including the mayor and deputy mayor exploded the myth of the leftist stronghold in Lalitpur. Furthermore, the overrated strength of the Unity Centre in the core city areas of Lalitpur could not be translated into votes which also shattered another myth that the CPN (UML) was weaker than the Samyukta Jana Morcha in Lalitpur city area.

The vote tally from the Lalitpur municipality confirms that the CPN (UML) has more mass following than the Unity Centre. The negotiations for electoral adjustment between two groups had failed due to conflicting claims of their respective strength in the Lalitpur municipality and each of them had staked claim for the mayoral posts there.

However, the claims of the Unity Centre was proved unfounded considering the very poor votes its candidates obtained in the elections. The victory of NC candidates in the so-called 'left strongholds' proves that the voters can take a swing to the left and right in consideration to the merits and performance of the political party and its candidates.

That the voters elected leftists in the last general elections from the Kathmandu and Lalitpur should not mean that they were committed to the ideology of leftism. This time they changed their sides which should be an eye opener to all political parties that the voters preference is fluid and should not be taken for granted.

Declining Strength

The leftist parties need to do a lot of homework if they are to sustain as a political entity. The declining strength of leftists substantiated by the distancing of the voters away from them should goad them into self-assessment about what went wrong in their roles and performance.

UML Guilty of Complacency

92AS1159E Kathmandu *THE RISING NEPAL*
in English 8 Jun 92 p 4

[Article by Gyan Rai: "The Local Polls and CPN (UML) Setback: Some Possible Reasons"]

[Text] Now that the results of the local polls are being announced in increasingly fast frequencies, the intense pre-election speculations that gripped the nation as a whole as to which of the parties in the fray would be securing the maximum number of seats in the 36 municipalities and the 3995 village development committees would more or less subside and the queries answered.

Tally of the Local Polls

According to the tallies notched up by the respective parties contesting the local polls, the Nepali Congress seems to be leading in the majority of the municipalities and also in the village development committees. Its nearest contender is the Communist Party of Nepal

[CPN-UML] (United Marxist-Leninist) with the lightly dismissed Rastriya Prajatantra Party, coming to a surprising third.

While the gains garnered by the respective parties would soon make their weights felt in the yet-to-be-held district development committees' polls, if we go by the current trends in the seats scored by the parties, the configuration in the district level is more or less apparent.

Be that as it may, the local poll results would undoubtedly be intensely debated, and analysed, by the concerned parties and circles for many weeks to come as they had not only led to the breaking down of some pre-conceived notions but also to the throwing up of many a surprise.

The encroachment made by the Nepali Congress [NC] Party's candidates in the perceived home turf of the CPN (UML) has, apart from breaking down the myth—that the latter, had, over the years turned the areas into "red" bastions—also showed that there existed many a political chinks in the "invincible" armour that the leftists, before the local polls, were not that shy in portraying.

The pre-poll prediction held by many was that the results would be going the way of the general elections—that was, that the NC would more or less score in the districts which sent up NC candidates to the Parliament with the CPN (UML) showing its strength in those that elected its candidates during that time.

But the present local elections' results belied this pre-poll notion, thus throwing up many excruciating queries. And one of them is—how did the NC manage to pull off the "red" rug virtually from under the CPN (UML) feet? And why did the very voters who, during the time of the general elections, sent CPN (UML) candidates to the national legislature, turn their backs on the same party's nominees during the time of the local polls?

As far as the first query is concerned, there would be many theories, obviously forthcoming from the concerned circles in time to come and to which the NC would be either highlighting or refuting them as and when it feels like it. But as of now, what can be gleaned from the NC victory in the CPN (UML) enclaves is that the former had, prior to the local polls, done some thorough soul-searching and effected the proper amount of initiatives to woo the all-important voters in those areas.

On the other hand, if we are to again go by the commonly held premise that a victory by one is at the expense of the other contender, we can safely assume that the CPN (UML) gave the NC enough amount of political ammunition to blast its perceived "red" citadels to smithereens.

Could it be that one of them was the "confrontational" posture affected by the CPN (UML) leadership, especially after becoming the biggest opposition group sitting in the Parliament? This unbending approach of the same

party was played to the hilt by some right-leaning papers until the time of the local elections.

Nevertheless, it would [be] foolhardy to believe only the papers' charges without first giving the CPN (UML) the benefit of the doubt. And needless to say, in almost each and every encounter with the NC (and thereby the government) it was seen by the people to be putting on a confrontational pose and which slowly, but surely, led to the formation of the idea—that the CPN (UML) was opposing just for the sake of opposition and not on the merits and demerits of the issues involved—in the people's mind.

While there might be some obvious causes, especially emanating from its inherent ideological belief and contradictions, behind the seeming inability of the CPN (UML) leadership to put up a "gentler" face and posture before the people, the local poll results should be enough to jolt the current leftist leadership out from its "delusion of grandeur" and sense of manifested "destiny" that it started projecting after the general elections outcome.

The local poll results can be, in more ways than one, constructed as a stinging rebuke to the CPN (UML) leadership by the people who had sent so many of its candidates to the national legislature to, among others, not only voice their genuine grievances, but to provide "constructive" criticisms and suggestions to the government so that their current burdens, economic or otherwise would be looked into by it and necessary initiatives to ameliorate them forth-coming from the same.

Yet another cause that led to the CPN (UML) receiving a strong drubbing from the NC in the local polls could be the glaring absence from the former of any worthwhile plans and programmes to go before the people—as it did during the time of the general elections.

Instead of evolving alternative plans and programmes, especially in the development areas, what the people noticed was that the launching of an all-out "polemic" battle with its erstwhile "allies" by its workers and cadres dispersed throughout the nook and corner of the nation.

The signal that this ensuing "ideological battle" between the leftist groups, which had reached an understanding amongst themselves as far as seat arrangements were concerned in the more than a year old general elections, was loud and clear: a squabbling front would not only collapse sooner or later but by doing so, would not be able to bring into fruition its pledges and promises, leave alone implement them.

Of course, there could be reasons for the CPN (UML) to go to the hustings without the similar seat arrangements that it made with its other erstwhile allies about a year ago. And undoubtedly, its own leadership must have had sanctioned the moves to discard its other "former" allies this time round after some intense backroom dealings and conclaves.

That it turned out to be a gross miscalculation on its part need not be dealt here, for the results of the local polls are there for all to see and mull over with. But more than this, it showed that its leadership's calculations, which obviously must have had been based on the feedbacks forthcoming from its local and district units, were either totally at variance with its units' feedbacks or the same (feedbacks) were completely glossed over by the leadership for one reason or the other.

General Impression

Whatever may be the reasons, the thorough drubbing that CPN (UML) received at the hands of the NC in the just concluded hustings must have had sent some strong shockwaves through its rank-and-file as well as its leadership structure. And the general impression amongst the people is that this time round, the CPN (UML) tried to bite off more than it can chew, leave alone thinking out the size of its throat (or gullet).

NC Better Organized

92AS1159F Kathmandu THE RISING NEPAL
in English 12 Jun 92 p 4

[Article by Saubhagya Shah: "Local Poll Results: The NC, CPN (UML) Appraisal"]

[Text] If anything, the results of the recently concluded local elections evince a clear swing of the voters mood in favour of the ruling Nepali Congress Party (NC) leaving the numerous Left parties especially the main parliamentary Opposition Nepal Communist Party (CPN-UML) high and dry. The spectacular and unexpected performance of NC has stunned the opposition and sent them groping for answers.

Near-Total Rout

The near total rout of the major left party from prestigious Kathmandu Valley—where only last year they completely dominated the Parliamentary elections—is indeed astounding to political pundits and laymen alike. The only saving grace for the left in the Valley was the impressive win notched by Nepal Labour and Peasant Party (NLPP) in Bhaktapur Municipality.

What's even more surprising is despite the number of serious charges being levelled against the NC Government in the period immediately preceding the local elections the NC still managed to emerge a winner. The accusations of spiralling prices of essential commodities, the April 6 incidence in which a number of people were killed and the general deteriorating law and order situation were quite grave and as far as campaign politicking goes, the Opposition couldn't have asked for better ammunition.

At one point, in the aftermath of the Near-Complete success of the April 6 and May 3 Nepal Bandh called for by the radical CPN (Unity Centre), the left parties

seemed poised for a replay of their stunning parliamentary success of last year in the Valley. Yet, somehow they couldn't pull their act together and obviously unable to fathom the voters' mood. In the euphoria of the convincing victory, even the NC cadres now admit that they had entered the election fray with a loser's mind-set.

The success of the NC isn't only limited to urban areas, they have made an impressive gains even in rural hinterland considered to be impregnable left citadels by winning the majority of the Village Development Committee (VDC) seats in eastern and central hilly districts. Even in such acclaimed Lal Quillas" as Patan and districts like Jhapa Ilam and Bardiya where the CPN (UML) had swept all parliamentary seats, the NC achieved a major success by bagging more than fifty percent of the local unit seats. This is not a mean achievement considering the existing grassroots level organizational strength of the communists.

Over-confidence, a sense of infallibility and the accompanying complacency seems to have been the major factors that undid the Left's electoral fortunes. They may have also been guilty of drawing wrong conclusions from the apparent success of the last month's Bandhs in the sense that they may have understood the general disaffection of public to mean unequivocal support for them. And the egoistic squabbling among the various communist factions contributed in not too small a measure in eroding the public's faith in the Left alternative. The degree to which the various Left groups—especially the CPN (UML) and the radical Unity Centre—stooped to belittle each other seemed rather unbecoming and childish.

The apparent inconsistency on major ideological platform and public issues further eroded the popular support for the CPN (UML) the largest communist party. The too-frequent shifts in Janabad, Naulo Janabad to Bahudaliya Janabad, born out of the immediate exigencies of the moment were hard for the electorate to follow with any clarity and gave the impression of lacking consistency and continuity.

The CPN (UML) seems to be passing through the throes of ideological dilemma generated by the urge to project a constitutionally democratic front for the national and international audience and, at the same time, maintaining the romantic revolutionary image at the local level for the middle and lower level rank and file, to the extent that these two facades are mutually contradictory, the CPN (UML) stands to lose the poll game as the appearance of ad hocism can prove to be fatal for any party in the sense that it dissipates the public's confidence and faith.

The handling of last year's civil servants agitation wasn't exactly a feather in the cap of the CPN (UML) either. Although the party lent much support to the agitation in the early phase, the civil servants felt betrayed when the party later unceremoniously dumped the agitation and the movement subsequently fizzled out. A large section

of the unpartisan civil servants were left with the feeling of having been made mere pawns in the party's power maneuverings with the government.

April 6 Bandh programmes to some extent may have actually harmed the mantle of the CPN (UML) as the premier Left organisation. Although the closure was called by the United Centre, the CPN (UML) nevertheless lent "moral support" for the same. After the whooping success of the closure, there began a round of claims and counterclaims between the two left factions for donning the credit of the Bandh success.

Another closure was jointly slated by most Left factions for May 3, but in a dramatic volte-face the CPN (UML) pulled out from the programme four days before the scheduled closure calling it as unnecessary and the ruling party deftly manipulated the occasion to deepen the fissure among the Left, thus pre-empting any sort of alliance among the Left parties during the local election. But despite the backout of the CPN (UML) the second Bandh too was more or less successful, shattering the conventional wisdom that closures in Kathmandu couldn't be enforced without the CPN (UML) backing. That seriously undermined the clout of the CPN (UML) in the peoples perceptions.

On the other hand, more than anything else the NC's impressive election victory must be attributed to better organisation coupled with persistent and aggressive campaigning than it was able to field during the last general election. Obviously, the NC had learnt its lesson well. Secondly, it's always much easier to run elections for the ruling party, be it in India or America, as the opposition can't hope to match the resources and facilities—so vital in determining electoral fortunes—that is available to the party in power.

DDC Elections

Now, after the completion of the first round of the VDC and municipalities elections, all eyes are turned to the forthcoming District Development Committee [DDC] elections to be chosen by the VDC and municipalities members. In more than 60 districts, where the NC controls a majority of the electorates, it will be a straight walkover (as the elections for DDCs will be indirect). But in districts where no single party commands a majority of electorates, it will be interesting to see how electoral alliance and coalitions form. Most of all, it remains to be seen how, if any, polarization takes place amongst the left and whether they have learnt by lessons from the present setback.

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